

A
PLAINE AND
FAMILIAR EXPO-
SITION OF THE
Eleuenth and Twelfth Chapters
of the Prouerbs of
SALOMON.

PROVERBS I. 5.

*A wise man shall heare and increase in learning, and a man
of vnderstanding shall attaine vnto wise counsels.*



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TO THE RIGHT VVORSHIPFULL WIL-

LIAM FENYS Esquire, and Sir

WILLIAM COPE Knight, grace,

mercy and peace,

(..)



HE due regard which we haue of
you both, for the speciall gifts
wherewith it hath pleased GOD
to grace you; hath moued vs to
present vnto you iointly this te-
stimonie of our vnfaigned loue.
We doe therather publish this
Treatise vnder your names, be-

cause we would eucourage you, to runne forward con-
stantly in that Christian race which you haue already
so happily begunne, and to answer that good expecta-
tion which is generally and iustlie conceived of you.
We haue long waited and much desired to be imploied
again, as formerly (through Go.'s mercy) wee haue
been. But being hitherto disapointed of that hope, and
esteeming an vnprofitable life to be a kinde of vncom-
fortable death; we thought it our bounden duty to of-
fer our seruice to the Chuch, and furtherance to your
faith, in the best manner we can, since wee may not vse

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such

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

such meanes as we would : As you haue been attentiu
hearers whiles we preached, so (we doubt not) but you
will be diligent readers of that which is heere written.
We shall esteeme it a sufficient gaine for our trauell, if
either your selues, or any other may reape fruit by our
labours. The God of all mercy increase his graces
in vs all, and multiply his blessings vpon vs, that
our life and death may bring glory to
him, and euerlasting peace to
our owne soules.

Your VVorships
in all Christian duties

to be Comanded,

JOHN DOD,
ROBERT CLEAVER.





TO THE GODLIE

Reader.



Christian Reader, by meanes of our promise, wee are growne into thy debt, which if GOD adde ability to our willingnesse, thou shalt finde vs as ready to discharge. And for thy better assurance of our faithfull meaning heerein, wee haue communicated vnto thee our labours on these two Chapters, in part of paiment, vntill we can proceed to the rest. Onlie this we must intreat of thee, that thou wilt deale with vs, as thou wouldest with iust and honest debtors which duely pay thee money. If our coine be currant, carrying truth and veritie, the stampe of Gods holie spirit, reiect it not though it be duskyish, without glittering shew, or curious workmanship: but if ought by mistaking hath escaped vs that wanteth weight, or prooueth not good mettall, returne it louinglie and in brotherlie maner vnto vs, and we will doe our best endeauour to yeelde thee bet-

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To the Godly Reader.

ter matter for it. The eight first Chapters a godlie learned man hath trauelled in, whose paines wee expected before this time to haue inioied with thee, and that caused vs to goe forwards, omitting the beginning, vntill we come to the end. The method wee confesse, woulde be very preposterous and aefectiue, were it not that so good a supplie would reduce it into due order. And so we commit the whole worke both of our writing, and thy reading, to the direction and blessing of Gods holy spirit, whom we pray to giue thee vnderstanding to know his wil, with a faithfull heart to beleue and obey the same, through Iesus Christ. Amen. Draiton this seuenth of Nouember. 1606.

Thine in all Christian duties,

JOHN DOD.
ROBERT CLEAVER.



AN EXPOSITION OF THE ELEVENTH CHAP- TER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER. XI.

Verse 1. False balances are an abomination to the Lord: but a perfect weight pleaseth him.



Under false balances are comprehended all vnjust weights, lines and measures. And therewithall is condemned whatsoever kind of guile, and deceit may be found either in the buier, or seller. As when that which is sold is defectiue either in quantity, or quality, not being fit for the vse that it is bought for, or not correspondent to the price that is paid for it, or not answerable to

the testimony that is giuen of it. And with these doth *Amos* charge the wicked wealthy men of his age: *They make the Ephah or measure small, & the shekell, or price great, & falsifie the weights of deceit. That they may buie the poore for silver, and the needy for shoes, and sell the refuse of their wheat.* So on the other side in the buyer, when he shall faile of all meet proportion betweene the price that he payeth, and the commodity that he buieth, giuing farre lesse than the worth and valse of it, And where it is said,

B

They

They are abomination to the Lord, it is not meant that his quarrell is against the insensible creatures, but he is displeased with the iniquity of the persons, which make, vse, keepe, or allow them. Whereby the other clause may be better vnderstood, that the Lord is pleased with such as do vprightly vse them, & with loue of equity, exercise it in their traffique, and couenants.

Doct. 1.

All instruments and meanes of falshood are hatefull to God. If God speake this but once, and in one place, and no where else but in this place, yet he is of sufficient authority to require credit to his word, because he that cannot lie, hath spoken it, who also knoweth best both what doth offend, and please him: but hee doth often confirme it in the scriptures, that the multiplicity of testimonies may the more forcibly perswade vs to belecue. The selfe same words in effect are not only repeated, but redoubled in this booke, and that sometimes in one chapter. *Diuers weights, & diuers measures, both these are euen an abominatiō to the Lord, Diuers weights are abomination to the Lord, & false ballances are not good.* Cap. 20. 10. 23.

Reasons,
Deut. 25. 15. 16

First his commandement is hereby violated: for he hath expressly forbidden such vnrighteous dealing. *Thou shalt not haue in thy bag two manner of weights, a great, and a small; neither shalt thou haue in thine house diuers measures, a great, and a small; but thou shalt haue a iust weight: a perfect, and a iust measure shalt thou haue &c.* For all that do such things, and all that doe vnrighteouslie, are abomination to the Lord thy God. Which is not so to be vnderstood, as though it were absolutely vnlawfull to haue diuers sorts of weights or measures, as ounces, and pounds: as yards, and elles: as pecks, and bushels, &c. Neither yet to haue many of the same sort: for many may be needfull, according as men haue manifold occasions to vse them; but to haue them vnequal each to other, which ought to be of the same size, as some of larger content to buy with, and others of lesser quantity to sel with, this is that which is here prohibited.

Secondly, his ordinance by this is inuerted, for he hath instituted the vse of negotiation, market, and exchange, for the mutual benefit of both sides, and this is for the good of neither: for the one is endamaged in his purse, and the other in his conscience,

ence. He would haue commerce and traffique to proceed from loue, to be exercised in loue, and mere to increase loue; and this course is altogether contrary to loue, and a meanes to ingender vnkindnes, and hatred. He requireth that iustice and equiry should moderate these affaires, and *that no man should oppresse or defraude his brother in any matter*; but here is filthy lucre most respected, and followed, and our brethren wronged, and beguiled. 1. Theſſ. 4. 6.

Thirdly, this sinne is so much the more lothed of God, by how much it is better liked of them that practise it. Their closenes, & cunning in acting of it, doth for a time augment their wealth, and not impaire their credit, & therefore they count their course lawfull, and themselves happy for such prosperous successe: because man findeth no fault with them, they thinke that God findeth no falshood in them; and seeing yet they haue no punishment inflicted vpon them, they dreame also that no wickednesse is committed by them. For so the prophet complaineth: *Hee is a Merchant: the ballances of deceit are in his hand: he loueth to oppresse. And Ephraim said, notwithstanding I am rich: I haue found me out riches in all my labours: they shall find no iniquity in me, that were wickednesse.* Hos. 12. 7. 8.

Admonition not only to forbear all fraudulent and wrongfull dealing, but with hatred to detest it, and with horror to flie farre from it. That which is hurtfull to our brother is hatefull to God, and therefore can neuer bee helpfull to vs. If hee iudge it vnrighteous we shall find it vnprofitable: if it be damnable in his sight, and therefore his soule doth hate it, it will at last bee in our sence, and our soule shall rue it. It may bring mony and wealth, and raise vp mens state, and family, but it will draw downe iudgements vpon family, state, and wealth, and mony, and make all to be execrable. For that which is spoken in another case, is also verified in this; *Bring not abomination into thine house, lest thou bee accursed like it, but utterly abhorre it, & count it most abominable, for it is accursed.* As the gold, and siluer, and other costly matter, whereof the idols were made, & wherewith they were adorned, was execrable in respect of impiety, so is this trade of getting, and riches so gotten in regard of iniquity. And therefore both Deut. 7. 26.

are very offensive to the Lord : both are pestilent to mens families: both are perilous to their state : both are pernicious to their soules. For a cursed possession may make the person accursed, and bring the whole house to desolation. Which should perswade men not onely to make staie of getting goods vniustly, but to make no stay of ridding their hands iustly thereof. For as they sinne grievously which indirectly receiue that which is none of their owne; so doe they also that retaine it, and restore it not to the right owner. And therefore in *Micah* it is set as a note of sinners, and such as are obstinately sinfull, and which conceiue of God as a patron of their sinfulness, that vpon admonition giuen vnto them from the Lord, would not reforme their falsehood.

Are yet the treasures of wickednesse in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I iustifie the wicked balances, and the deceitfull weights?

Micah, 6. 10.

2

Reproose and terror of gamesters, and those that make Dice, Cardes and Boules, with such like instruments of iniury, to be the measures of their trade, and the meanes of their maintenance, Thereby are they made as odious to God, as infectious to men, & as great aduersaries to equity, as they which by false weights doe wrong their chapmen. They being ashamed to appeare in their practise, doe secretly defraude men like theeues that filch in a corner: but these impudently glorying in their sinfulness, doe openly professe their purpose, like robbers that commaund mens purses by the hie waye side. They take the way to bring some part of their neighbours goods to their hands, by receiuing much for a litle: but these strue to bring euery parte to themselues, by getting all for nothing. And for this cause whatsoeuer successe they haue, howsoeuer the worlde goeth with them, they speed vnhappily. If they winne other mens mony, they loose their blessednes, and Gods gracious fauour. If they lose their owne mony, they get a curse, and Gods grievous displeasure.

Deff. 2.

But a true weight, &c. The Lord doth not onely respect the piety which is vsed in his owne worshippe, but the truth and iustice that is performed to men.

When the Lord himselfe is asked what manner of men should dwell

dwell in his tabernacle, and rest in his holie mountaine, that is, which should haue a good estate here, and an habitation for euermore in heauen, he describeth them by their innocent, and harmlesse behaviour towards their brethren. He that walketh vprightly, and Psal. 15. 2. *worketh righteously, and speaketh the truth in his heart.* Hec, certainly regardeth that work which he so largely rewardeth with such wages: and hee is well pleased with that person in this life, whom he will receiue to life euermore: and equal it is with him, that they which conuerse with earthly people in righteously, should also continue with heauenly saints in glory.

First, they do seruice herein to God himselfe; for in conscience of his will, and obedience to his word they giue themselves to this vprightnesse. *Reasons.*

Secondly it is his owne worke, and proceedeth from himselfe: for all righteously is the grace, and fruit of his holy spirit. As flesh and blood, with nature, and reason, did neuer yet beget any sound piety, and religion; so it neither will, nor euer can direct any mans heart to true iustice, and righteously. 2

Thirdly, trueth both in word and deed is a part of his glorious image, whereby his people are confirmed, and made like vnto him, and therefore he cannot but take delight in that which is so agreeable with his owne nature, and a liuely representation of himselfe. 3

Consolation to them that doe constantly and conscionable addict themselves to the exercise of equitie. None hath truly learned this, but such as haue bin apprentices in heauen, whom the Lord hath informed in the mystery of this trade. *Ob.* But manie others gaine more mony, and thriue faster, and grow greater then they doe. *Sol.* But they gaine more comfort, and thriue better, and grow happier then all others doe. For howsoeuer it fa-*Vse.* reth with their state for quantity of earthly possessions, it cannot but goe well with their soules, for plenty of heauenly graces, and though peradventure they haue presently but little substance in their houses, yet there remaineth for them an ample treasure in the heauens: & that which is best for them, is most firmly assured to them, which is Gods euermore loue and fauour. Albeit therefore thy vocation bee meane and of no great account, and thy

stocke slender & of no great value, they returne seldome, and of no great commodity: yet if thou be faithfull in a meane trade, with a small stocke and a slow returne, all shall be acceptable, all shall be profitable, all shall be comfortable. So often as thou hast mans custome to buy, or sell with thee, thou hast Gods company to reward and blesse thee; and whensoever thou dealest wel with any, he taketh notice of it, to deale better with thy selfe.

Verse 2. *When pride commeth, then commeth contempt, but with the lowly is wisdom.*

Vhen pride commeth, that is, when it groweth to maturity, hauing power to puffe vp mens hearts, and shewing it selfe in words, or workes, in countenance, apparel, or gestures, then commeth contempt, that is, shame then approcheth, and is neere at hand, marching in the next rank after this lofty heart, & insolent behauiour. As is to be seen in many who hauing bin first lifted vp in their owne haughty minds, were afterwards cast down by Gods righteous iudgments, either into phrēses, or grosse sins or ruine of state, or obloquy for their former hidden faults now published at last to their great disgrace. The other part of the antithesis, containing the honor that doth accompany humility, is argued by consequent, in this manner: when pride commeth, then commeth folly, which euer bringeth shame: but when humility commeth, then commeth wisdom, which is neuer without glory.

Doct. 1.

Pride is a forerunner of shame and reproach. It is a common prouerbe ordinary in the mouth of the people: Pride goeth before, and shame commeth after. And it is an holy prouerbe often vsed by Salomon in this booke: *Pride goeth before destruction, and an high mind before the fall.* Pro. 16. 18. & 18. 12. And it is a select prouerbe, often vsed by Christ in the new Testament, *Who soeuer exalteth himselfe shall be brought low, & he that humbleth himselfe shall be exalted.* Luke 14. 11.

We see in buildings that when walls waxe thicker by hollownes and swelling, they will shortly come lower by downfall and ruine; and so standeth the case with all proud persons, their
great

great heart doth threaten ſome great miſchiefe to be nigh vnto them. Which may be exemplified by diuers preſidents in the ſcriptures, which are propoſed as real examples, for euery man to take warning by. When *Nebuchadnezzar* was bragging of his Babel which he had built for his glory, he was baniſhed from all habitation, nor hauing ſo much as a cottage, and like a beaſt made to liue among the beaſts in the fields, with ignominy. When *Haman* thought to ride on horſeback, and to be waited on like a King, he was driuen to lacky on foot, and to wait attendance like a page: and purpoſing to hang *Mordecai* on high to honour himſelfe, he prepared an high gallows to be hanged on himſelfe. When *Herod* thought himſelfe good enough to take vpon him the ſtate and honour of a God, the Lord declared him to be bad enough to be deuoured of contemptible vermine.

Fiſt, they haue God to be their enemy, *he reſiſteth them*, and *they are all an abomination vnto him*: not only ſome arrogant fellows that haue proud hearts, and beggars purſes, but euery ſuch alſo as ſit vpon princely thrones, and beare kingly Scepters and weare imperiall Diadems. And if he ſee them to be abomination, and doth therefore abhor them, they ſhall appeare abominable, and men will deſpiſe them. Reasons.
Iam. 4. 6.
Prou. 16. 5.

Secondly, they are fooles, as the text it ſelfe intendeth: and therefore cannot but behaue themſelues fooliſhly, *like drunkards which are overcome with wine*. They are ſinfull fooles, more deſtitute of grace then of wit. For proud behauiour is the foame or froath that proceedeth from much wickednes, and a proud heart is a priſon wherein they are withheld from comming to repentance. And ſo their owne folly, and Gods wiſedome: their owne ſinfull waies, and Gods righteous iudgements, their owne impenitence, and Gods ſeuerity will bring them to the poſſeſſion of their inheritance, and that is *ſhame and diſhonour*, *how highly ſooner they haue been exalted*. Prou. 3. 35. 2
Hab. 2. 5.

Thirdly, they are ſacrilegious perſons, and robbe God of his glory, which is moſt proper & pretious vnto him, and therefore it is equall that he ſhould ſtrip them of the honour which is ſo much deſired of them.

Reprooſe of their folly that uſe pride as a ſtirrop to mount vp thereby

thereby to promotion and credit, that thinke it the onely waye to preferment, if they can set forth themselves with some ostentation, and lift vp their eyebrows about their brethren. And this is growne almost to an vniuersall contagion, wherewith the greatest number of states and ages, of sexes, and persons in all places, are dangerously infected. Some thereby seeking to be admired, others to be aduanced, many to be feared, and al to be better satisfied in the accomplishment of their desires. But how many loose by seeking, and sinke by aspiring, & runne into reproch by hunting after vaine estimation? whiles they leaue their standing, and would rise about the toppe of their places, they faile of their footing, and fall downe to the bottome.

2 Instruction to be as much afraid of pride, as of shame, and euen of secret cōceitednes within, no lesse then of open discredit without, and therefore to vse all good remedies to cure this dangerous inflammation of such a windy stomacke. And first for this purpose let every man take heed that he be not illuded with the glosses and colourable appearances of knowledge and wisdom, or any other good partes of nature or grace in himselfe, when in truth they are nothing but shews and shadowes. For diuers by an ouerweening conceit haue themselves in hie admiration, when others to whom they are better knowne, haue them in great derision.

And albeit others either in flattery, or good opinion should commend vs for those good things which we are priuy to our selues not to be in vs, yet let vs not receiue the doubtfull testimony of strangers against the euident witnesse of God, and our owne consciences. For this were as absurd as if a needy creature pinched with penury, and almost hunger-starued, should bee brought to beleue that he swimmeth in plenty and were a liberrall house keeper, hauing his table alwaies furnished with variety of dishes; or one deeply indebted, and ready to breake for want of ability, should be induced to thinke himselfe the onely monied man in the country, sufficient in wealth to lend and to giue to many others. Secondly, when God hath graced any with excellent gifts which are not adulterate, and counterfeited, but such as are currant, and able to abide the touchstone, and to hold weight in the ballance, yet as they feele what they haue, so let them

them find what they want: as they see their graces and vertues, so let them search into their corruptions, and vices: as they haue a good conscience in the performance of many good duties, so let them consider the innumerable sins that they haue committed, the multitude of seruices, which they haue neglected, the hypocrisie, infidelity, vnchearefulnesse, and other imperfections that haue stained their best words & actions; and these will help to hold downe their hearts in humility, & take away all matter of glorying. For the best in the world shall haue cause to blush and hang downe their heads, if they make comparison between that they are, & that which they ought to be. Though thy knowledge bee great, yet how much art thou ignorant of that thou mightst haue knowne, if thou hadst been as diligent to seeke it as God was to offer it vnto thee? Though thou haue faith, and loue and repentance, and by vertue thereof dost shew forth the fruits of the spirit in holy obedience, yet how small time hast thou spent, how softly hast thou trauelled, and how little ground hast thou gotten in this way that leadeth to eternall life? But in the course of sinfulness didst thou not begin the race soone, and runne swiftly, and come backe againe slowlie? Thirdly, it will much diminish a selfe liking, and too great opinion of our own excellencie, if we turne our eies without enuy to the excellent graces of knowledge and discretion of zeale, and moderation, and of all other amiable gifts of our brethren, wherein they goe beiond vs. And this is the receipt which the holy ghost prescribeth to the Philippians against this very maladie; *Let nothing, saith he, be done in contention, or vaine glory, but in meeknesse of mind let every one esteeme others better then himselfe. Look not euery man on his own things, but euery man also on the things of other men.* Lastly, consider the hand which ministreth euery good thing that we enioy, whether it be gift of nature, or of grace, or of outward possession; whether it concerne the body, or the mind, the state, or the dignity. *All is of God, all is from God, and all is for God, and therefore let all the glory be given to God. What hast thou, saith S. Paul, that thou hast not receiued? If thou hast receiued it, why gloriest thou as though thou haddest not receiued it?* 1. Cor. 4. 7. It becommeth not a beggar that liues of the almes

Phil. 2. 3. 4.

basket to bragge of his meat, nor insolently to compare with him, or his, that relieueth him in his miserable necessity.

Dott. 2.

But with the lowly Euery humble man is also indued with wisdom. Lowly and wise be so far conuertible as that the one can neuer be affirmed of any, without the other: the habit of humility doth inferre the possession of wisdom, and the want of either doth euict the priuation of both.

Reasons.

First, the fountaine from whence lowlines floweth, doth alwaies in the same current send forth the streames of wisdom. The Lord Iesus doth neuer deriue to any the power and ability of subduing his heart, but he giueth him also sound knowledge how to obtaine it, and holy vnderstanding how to vse it.

2

Secondly, God himselfe is the instructor of all humble persons, and frameth their hearts to be teachable, that they shal not faile to learn of him, and therefore must needs receiue wisdom from him. This is agreeable to the promise which hee maketh, *Psalm. 25. 9. Them that be meeke will he guide in iudgement, and teach the humble his way.* He giueth grace and guidance with his precepts, for mind, and heart, for knowledge, and affection, for will, and conscionable practise.

Psalm. 74. 1.

Thirdly, the happinesse which they procure to themselues doth giue a cleere testimony of their wisdom. They enioy the fauor of God, and the friendship of Gods people. In their hearts they haue peace, ouer their affections they haue power. They are alwaies in the way of preferment, either to come to honour in a great place, or for honor to come to them in a meane place. For euery state they are fitted: whiles they are to be tried with aduersity, they can beare it without impatiency: when they shal be called to prosperity, they can vse it without insolency: as long as they continue in this world they are rightful possessors of the earth; as soone as they depart to another world, they shall bee glorious inhabitants of heauē. In which respects the spirit of God saith, *that it is better to be of an humble mind with the lowly, then to deuide the spoiles with the proud.* *Pro. 16. 19.* The meanest & most afflicted vnderling that is humble and meeke, is in farre better case then the mightiest & most puissant conqueror that is proud and haughty.

Reprooffe

Reprooe of such as deride their simplicity for vndergoing so many molestations, and charge them with folly for not facing out matters with an impudent countenance, and condemn them of madnesse, because they seeke not pompe and earthly excellency. But it is not because the humble want wisdom, but because wisdom seemeth foolishnes to fooles, and such as are destitute of vnderstanding. They looke vpon their troubles, but seele not their comforts: they see their persecutions, but foresee not their deliuerance: they behold their present condition in afflictions, but discern not of their happines to come in glory.

Instruction to make most account of their counseils and company, seeing they are best of al stored with wisdom and knowledge. None are so wel able to giue aduice as they: for though others may haue more countenance & greatnesse, yet they attain not to so much counsell and goodnes. None are so ready to giue aduice as they: for they do it most willingly, and cheerfully, with all mildnes, and kindnes. None are so much blessed in the aduice which they giue as they: For their prayers are forcible with God and Gods presence is effectuell with them for assistance in such acceptable seruices.

Verse. 3. *The uprightnes of the iust shall guide them: but the forwardnes of the transgressours shall destroy them.*

By *vprightnesse* is not meant an extrauagant well meaning without further rule or warrant, as though good intēts were competent guides of our waies to saluation: but the sincerity of an heart faithfully, though not perfectly, willing to beleue and obey that which it knoweth, & resolutely, though not absolutely, desirous to know that which God shall reueile vnto it. Now this is said to *guide righteous men*, that is, shall procure good direction from the Lord, both for his seruice, and their own happines, and make them tractable to follow the same. Contrary to this is the condition of the wicked, who are not ledde with vprightnesse, but caried with peruersenes, and therefore misled by the same to their vndoing. For thus standeth the opposition: the vprightnesse of the iust shall guide them in the way, and so pre-

serue them:but the frowardnes of the wicked will keepe them from the way, and so destroy them.

Doct. 1.

The vprightnes Euery one that is truly godly hath a faithfull guide and counsellor in his own brest. A sound heart is the stern of the soule, & a good conscience is the pilot to gouern it, which will lead him thorow the whole course of his life, till he come to the haüen of safety & blessednes. So is the vprightnesse of *Iob* commended, that it directed him to the feare of God, & caused him to eschew euill. So is the soundnes of *Zacharie* and *Elizabeth* notified, that by vertue thereof they walked in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe. And so is the sincerity of all blessed persons extolled and praised by the same effects in the hundred and nineteenth psalme, *that they keepe the commandements of God, and worke no iniquity.*

Psal. 119. 2. 3.

Reasons. 1.

First, it will stirre vp men diligently to seeke for knowledge and vnderstanding; attending daily as suters at wisdomes gate in all the ordinances of God. When he speaketh, they will bring an eare to hearken: When he teacheth, they will bring an hart to learne. When need requireth, they will vie their lippes to aske counsell: in the word they will digge for wisdom: by prayer they will call for assistance: by meditation they wil apply all good instructions. And so seeking of God, with an whole heart is set in the scriptures, as an effect of vprightnes, & a cause of walking in the law of the Lord. *Psal. 119. 2.*

2

Secondly, where a good conscience is present, there the word of God is neuer absent: for that doth alwaies dwell with fidelity and truth. The same heart that entertaineth the one, doth euermore enioy the other. And that dealeth faithfully with them that be faithfull: it will not suffer them to wander asidethorow want of guidance, or to fall into mischiefes for fault of direction. It shall lead thee, saith one scripture, *when thou walkest; it shall watch for thee when thou sleepest; & when thou wakest it shall talk with thee* Thine eares shall heare a word behind thee, saith another scripture, *saying, this is the way, walke in that, when thou turnest to the right hand or to the left.*

Prou. 6. 12.

Isai 30. 21.

Thirdly, the spirit of God is alwaies in them that are vpright and true hearted, it moueth them to aske, to heare, to pray, to reade

reade, and to meditate : it maketh the word effectuall to speake, & their soules also flexible to yeeld to the word: it worketh sound iudgement in the mind, holy affections in the heart, alacrity and readinesse in the will, faith in the whole soule, and sincere sanctitie in the conuersation. Hereof the Apostle speaketh to the Romanes : *As many as are led by the spirit of God are the sonnes of God.* And it is as true on the other side, as many as are the sonnes of God, are led by the spirit of God: for this is euer reciprocal, and conuertible.

Confutation of the erronious opinion whereby many illude themselves, & their false boastings wherby they would deceiue others. They roue abroad in all the waies of sinfulness, in euery by lane of licentiousnesse, in ignorance, pride, wantonnesse, vnrhristines, cruelty, blasphemy, &c. Yee may find them almost euery where sauing in religious and honest exercises, and those they flie from, as if they were goales, & dungeons to hold them in: and yet they think, and say, and face it out, that their hearte is honest, though their life be lewd: all is well within; though all be naught without; they haue as good soules to God as the best, although they serue Satan asmuch as the worst. If these men haue vprightnesse, vprightnes hath lost her wonted vertue, & ceaseth to be vpright. For that which was vprightnesse in *Salomons* time and in all former ages was more faithfull, and forcible to preserue them whom it took charge of (as it doth all in whom it inhabiteth) from such inordinate & vicious behauiour. To which may be added also another brood of a wandering and vagrant mind, altogether vnsetled in al points of religion. They heare of multiplicity of opinions, and the differences of mens iudgements one from another : some are Papiists, some are Protestants, some are Brownists, so that they know not what to belieue nor whom to trust, and therefore iudge it their readiest way to credit none of them all, and not cleaue to any side. But the righteous are not tossed vp & down with such waues of vncertainty and doubtfulness: sincerity leaueth not men to shift for themselves, that for want of due informatiō in the waies of God, they should walk in flat Atheisme; The Lord promiseth better things to his people, that faithfully serue him. *What man is hee that feareth*

reth the Lord? him will he teach the waie that he shall chuse? P salm. 25. 12. Are ye left then without direction? then ye are found without righteousness. Doth not God teach you his way? then yee are voide of his feare.

3 Reproofe of them that commit themselues to the leading of contrary guides, which withhold al their passengers from sincerities, counsel & direction, and that is to vain pleasure, to filthy lucre, to carnall reason, to brutish lust, to the example & fashion of the wicked world, and to the sinfull motions which the diuell himselfe most craftily suggesteth. These are they that almost in al places are taken vp for leaders, they are neuer without work, they haue continuall imployment, and therfore it plainly appeareth that there is little vprightnesse, and that is as litle regarded, and as a few iust persons there are to be guided by it.

3 Consolation against the discouragements wherewith many faithfull Christians are assaulted in respect of the manifold perils which they passe thorow. Whē they look abroad into the world they see all kinds of inducements to euill, by perswasions, by threatning, by examples, and sophisticall defences: their carnall friends would allure in kindnesse, their crafty foes would illude them by cunning, the violent tyrants would cōpel thē by force. When they search into themselues, they finde corruptions, ignorance, errors, fearefulnesse, and inconstancie, which causeth them to fall into many feares, and doubts of their perseuerance. How, say they, shall wee persist and hold out in the dangerous dayes? How if the word of God should be taken from vs? how if deceiuers should be turned in among vs? how then shall we find the way to cuerlasting saluation? The holy Ghost telleth you in this place, if your harts be righteous and plaine, and honest, your vprightnesse shall lead you, the spirit of God will teach you, & his grace will establish you. Which *S. Iohn* doth also testifie, for the confirmation of such as were in the same case; *These things, saith he, haue I written vnto you concerning them that deceiue you, But the anointing, which you receined of him dwelleth in you: & yee need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and it is true, and is no lye, and as it taught you it shall abide in him.*

But the frowardnes) Wicked sinners are greatest workers of their owne woe. *They shall be taken in their own wickednesse*, saith the sixt verse: *they shall fall in their own wickednes*, saith the fift; *their frowardnes shall destroy them*, saith this. Whereby it appeareth that their misery commeth not from others, as an accidentall occasion, but groweth from themselues as the proper cause, neither is it an ordinary euil that is recurable, but a desperate ruine that is remediless; neither yet is it the subuersion of their state, or killing of their body, which is but temporary, but the perdition both of body & soule which is euerlasting. To this agreeth that which is spokē to the same purpose, in the fift chapter: *His owne iniquity shall take the wicked himselfe, and he shall be holden with the cords of his own sinne. He shall die for fault of instruction, and for going astray through his own follie.* Doff. 2.
Prou. 5. 22. 23

Here is a description of euery obstinate and contemptuous sinner, their wickednes doth worke destruction by degrees. It first apprehendeth them as an officer: it keepeth them afterwards in stocks, and bolts, as a Tayler. And lastly, it putteth them to death as an executioner.

First, they despise the patience, and long sufferance, the kindness and goodnes of God which waiteth for their repentance, & therefore *through the hardnesse of their hearts heape to themselves wrath against the day of vengeance.* Rom. 2. 4. 5. Reasons. 1.

Secondly, *they grieve and vex the spirit of God*, which offereth grace vnto them, and therefore *he turneth to be their enemy.* They with their peruersenes doe resist him, and he with his power will cast downe them. And so the prophet testifieth in the Psalmes: *With the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure, but with the froward thou setteest thy selfe to wrestle.* 2
Isaie 63. 01.

Thirdly, they scorne and despise the word and wisdom of God, and as much as in them is, cause others also to reiect it, and therefore it is iust with the Lord *to make them eat the fruit of their owne waies and to fill them with their owne deuices*, that is, *to bring them to a fearefull destruction.* Prou. 1. 30. 31. 3

Terror of them that practise sinne of purpose to offend them *Verse.* which dislike of their lewd waies. They will break the Sabbath in despite of them that would haue them better exercised; they will

will sweare, they say, and stare too, to anger such as admonish them of their vnlawfull oathes. Sillic creatures and miserable wretches, will they cut their owne throats to grieue others with the sight of their bloud? wil they strangle themselues that others might weepe for their cursed end? Their boisterous stubbernesse may bring a short sorow to others that hate their sinnes, & loue their soules, but a perpetuall shame to themselues, which ioyne with their sinnes against their soules.

Verse 4. Riches auaiile not in the day of wrath: but righteousnes deliuereth from death.

THese words seeme to containe an anticipation, or preuenting of an obiection, which might be mooued against the latter point of the former verse. What speake you of destruction to come vpon wicked men? I trust you will not extend it to all: for many of them are substantial wealthy men, of great state, and ability. Who can destroy them? What shall their power, and riches do the while? To this it is here answered, that riches auaiile not in the day of wrath: their wealth can neither withstand the strokes of God, nor lessen them, nor make them any whit the more able to beare them, when his anger doth execute iudgements, and when his iudgements declare his anger. But righteousness is that which deliuereth from death, and all other miseries, that the sting thereof shall neuer make any man miserable. See the more full handling and prosecution of these words, in the second verse of the tenth chapter.

Verse 5. The righteousnes of the vpright shall direct his way, or make his way straight, or euē: but the wicked shall fall in his owne wickednesse.

HErce he addeth to that which he had begun in the third verse & sheweth that sincerity, & righteousness do not only lead men to a good way, and tell them what is their duty, and fit to be performed, but maketh the way passable for them, and them constant and prosperous in it. The which againe is opposed the

the way of the wicked, euen their own sinfull course of life, being crooked and cragged, and rough, and rugged, and full of manifold perils, wherein at last they fall and perish.

Godly men haue not only a commandement, but ability giuen vnto them to walke in the Law of God. Their faithfulness doth leuell their way, and paue it before them, wherein they find not only equity, but ease also with delight and safety. And so much the Prophet doth intimate when he saith, *The waies of the Lord are righteous, and the iust shall walke in them: but the wicked shall fall therein.* D oct. Hos. 14. 10.

First, the affections sanctified do al ioyne hands in forwarding a man to a constant proceeding in godlines. The loue of God, and the hope of reward do ouercome, and subdue all difficulties and dangers, and beare downe all the impediments that may stoppe him by discouragements: and the feare of God, and dread of his displeasure doth suppress the force of worldly lusts and beate downe the conceits that may draw him to presumption. Reasons.

Secondly, the experience of Gods presence, fauour and blessing is very effectuell to continue their obedience. For hauing tasted how good the Lord is to them that feare him, they cannot liue without his company, and that is no where to be enioyed, but in the way of righteousness. 2

The Lord himselfe both by grace and prouidence doth helpe them in his worke. He giueth vertue and power to the ministry of his word, to prepare a way between himselfe and the heartes of his people, that there may be an intercourse for one to come mutually to the other, as *S. Luke* testifieth: *Euery valley shall be filled, and euerie mountaine and hill shall be brought low, and crooked things shall be made straight, and the rough waies shall bee made smooth.* *Luke 3. 5.* 3

He also measureth out a meet state for them, and maketh such a mixture or composition of prosperity and aduersity, of blessings and crosses, of comforts and sorrowes, as is most wholesome for their soules, and directeth all the occurrents that befall them to the furtherance of their saluation. And here of *Isaiah* speaketh, saying: *The way of the righteous is euennes, or equities, thou wilt*

Vsc.

weigh out a iust path for the righteous. He will ballance out euery thing that concerneth them in gold weights, that there shal not be the least defect, or excesse that might turne to their hurt.

Confutation of their pernicious illutions that think it impossible to walk in the waies of God, & therfore iudge it nothing dāgerous to stray out of thē at their pleasure. The preachers, say they do teach that which none can obserue, euerybody doth contrary, & we must do like others, or els we should be counted nobody. They lay too much vpon vs for praying often and hearing of sermons, and reading the scriptures, and keeping the sabbath: and so do they also too much restraine vs of pleasures, & profits of liberty in speeches, and freedome in apparell. We must follow our sports, for take away delights, and take away life. Wee must vse what meanes we can for our state, and make the most of our owne: we must in company behaue our selues like the company, according to their talke we must talke, and be merry according to their mirth: for an oath we cannot alwaies auoide it, it is but a small matter now and then to sweare a little. They would haue vs to become saints on earth, but it will not be, our nature cannot like of such precisenes, &c. And thus they make the easie yoke of Christ an importable burthen, and condemne his ministry of rigor, in requiring obedience, and iustifie themselves in disobedience. But leaue this shifting, and deale in good earnest, and speake the trueth plainly. Our sinnes, and rebellions, say, haue stopped vp our way, and we haue no iustice, nor vprightnes to open it vnto vs: we are slaues & bondmen to corruption, and held in thraldome and subiection of it. Otherwise the strength of the world, and the stream of the times could not carry you away so strongly. For *Noah* being a righteous man cold liue righteously in an age giuen ouer wholly to vnrighteousnesse. The seruices of God, wold not be so tedious vnto you, as that by no meanes you should be brought to exercise them. For to vpright mē they are not only possible, but pleasant, their soule longeth for them, they hunger and thirst after them, no thing is so much desired of them. Voluptuousnes, impiety, pride, and other lusts would not be so sweet vnto you, or so mighty in you, that you shold neither be willing to leaue them, nor able to forsake

for sake them. For where the spirit of God is, there is liberty. All good men abhorre these finnes, they pray against them, they striue against them, they preuaile against them. Grace ouercometh the flesh, and maketh them do that which the word requirereth, and shun that which the word forbiddeth, & be that which the word prescribeth. Though they performe not good things perfectly, yet they practise them faithfully: though they cast not off all euill fully, yet with hatred they resist it truly: though they haue so many infirmities as make them oft to sin, yet they haue so much holinesse, as maketh them alwaies saints.

Verse 6. *The righteousnesse of the vpright deliuereth them: but the transgressors shall be taken in their owne wickednesse.*

THis verse, as it may appear, is annexed to the former for confirmation of the point therein contained, that righteousnes doth direct the way of vpright men, both to holy conuersion, and happy state. Against the which a doubt may rise from the shew of the contrary, because that good men are sometimes plunged in great calamities, and sometimes in great transgressions: and therefore their way seemeth as indirect, as if they were wicked, and their righteousnesse to do them as little good as if they had none at all. Now this scruple he remoueth by shewing what benefit it bringeth, that then especially they haue the vse of it, when they fall into such distresses. For then the fruit thereof is most for their comfort when it shall deliuer them out of dangers, out of troubles, out of feares, out of temptations, out of offins, & from destruction. Yet not by strength of it own, but by the power of God: not according to their worthines in way of desert, but according to his goodnes in way of reward: not extended to all men that doe good works, but restrained to vpright men whose works are good. And for the clearer illustration of their blessed estate he bringeth in for contrary, the miserable condition of the wicked, opposing transgressours to vpright persons; their mischief to the others iustice: their perill to the others protection: the one part inclosed in the net of troubles is yet assured of safe escape by meanes of their graces, the other abroad at the

baite of prosperity shall certainly fall into snares by meanes of their wickednesse.

The doctrine which the former clause might minister, shal beas conueniently spoken of in the eight verse: and that which is to be raised out of the latter, hath been already handled in the third.

Verse 7. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation perisheth, and the hope of his power shall perish.*

THe meaning is, that euery sinfull mans affection of hoping, and happinesse hoped for, and strongest meanes to attaine to his hope, shall end with his life, and die at his death, & vanish away at the time of his destruction. The substance of the point hath been handled in the eight & twentieth verse of the former chapter, and therefore in this place we wil only note the circumstance of the time.

Doct.

The confidence of vngodly men is disappointed at their greatest need.

He neuer had good by any hope, which hath not the fruitiō of his hope at his death. Then either it setteth a man in possession of his blessedties, or else casteth him off into misery, woe, & perdition for euer. Though a man should neuer obtaine his desire in any earthly thing during his life, yet if he enioy saluation after this life, he hath failed of nothing. Though a man should misse of nothing that his heart could wish for, whiles breath is in his body, yet if he be damned, when the soule goeth out of his body, he hath neuer gained any thing. And this is the scope of *Iob* his speech: whē he saith, *What hope hath the hypocrite though he hath heaped vp riches, when God taketh away his soule?* Euen now in his deepest aduersitie, hee would not change state with the most plausible wicked, in their highest prosperity. For hee is sure that the end of his life will finish his sorrow, and begin his felicity, and therefore is willing to resigne vp his spirit into the hands of God: but their hope doth depart with their breath, and their damnation doth come with their death, and therefore God must wrest away their soules from them.

Iob. 17. 8.

Reasons.

First, they shall then stand before the iudgement seat of God him-

himselfe, and that which he speaketh they must heare, and that which they heare, they must see, and that which they heare and see, they must also suffer: for execution will accompany the sentence. Here they would not beleue his testimony, that their case was so bad as his word declared: there they shal feelee it to be worse then they could conceiue of. Here when he denounced plagues against their sins, they proclaimed peace to their soules: there they shall find the plagues according to their sins, and faile of the peace which they promised to themselves. Here he spake vnto them in goodnesse, that vpon their repentance they might obtaine euerlasting mercy: there *hee will speake vnto them in anger*, and for want of repentance will punish them eternally with iustice. Psal. 2. 5.

Secondly, the fearefull iudgement of God vpon their hearts, that they should not see how they were illuded in their expectation, vntill their death: when the case is remediless. If the vanity of their hope were discovered to them before, they might cast it off sooner, and lay a new foundation of a better: whereas resting still vpon the stability of that, it breaketh, when it cannot be repaired; and they fall, when they can neuer rise againe. If the five foolish Virgins had found their want of oile before the bridegroom was comming, they might in time haue prouided themselves, & be ready to enter with him to the wedding, before the dore was shut. If they which presumed so much of Christ his acquaintance (because they had eaten & drunk in his company, & heard him preach amongst them) had known before hand what small account he would haue made of them, they might haue vsed better meanes whiles time serued, to grow into his fauour. Math. 25.

Thirdly, the prerogatiue and priuiledge of Gods people would be much infringed, if wicked men should haue hope with them in the life to come, for therein standeth the contrariety between them. *The wicked, saith the Scripture, shall bee cast away for his lewdnes: but the righteous hath hope at his death.* Prou. 14. 32. For the present it commeth to passe commonly, that badde men are full, and good men are hungry, the one sort doe laugh, and the other waile and weepe, as our Sauour testifieth. Luk. 6. 25, and therefore hereafter their conditions shall bee changed on both

sides: the pleasure of the one shall be turned into paine, and the sorrowes of the other into endlesse comforts. As it is said by the Apostle concerning the godly, that if in this life only they had hope, they were of all most miserable; so it may be spoken touching the godlesse, that if in the life to come also they had hope, they were of all men most happy.

Vse. I.

Reproofe of their folly which liue in hope, that the time of their death will beget them hope, & not destroy it. They know that now they are sinfull persons, without all grace, & goodnes; but they trust that then they shall be conuerted, and brought in a moment to repentance. They know that now they stand in state of damnation, and if they should presently come to iudgement, they must needs perish; but they trust at the last gaspe to call vpon God for mercy, and thereby get pardon for all their sinnes, and so their soules shall be sau'd. As though death, and the pangs thereof were appointed for the preferment of Gods vngodly enemies. They haue bestowed themselves in the seruice of sinne, and spent their daies in rebellion against the Lord, and do they looke for reward thereof to be crowned with glory? Are theeues, and robbers, are cutpurfes, and other malefactours therefore bound ouer to the Assises, that they may bee put in commission, and called vp to the bench?

2

Rom. 8. 38.

Instruction to confirm our hope by putting our soules out of all peril of perishing afore our death or sicknes, or any other danger, least our euidence be to seek when our cause is to be tried. Let euery one of vs vpon apparance of election, by faith, and the fruits of sanctification, be able to say as truly, though not with as much feeling of assurance, as the Apostle did: *I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate vs from the loue of God which is in Christ Iesus.* This will make our life truly prosperous, and profitable, and our death blessed and comfortable; & our state in the world to come immortall, and glorious.

3

Consolation to such as feare God, that death wil deliuer them from the hopes, & the liues of their sinfull enemies. Away must their soules goe, and down must their carkasses, and where then
are

are their purposes, and what becomes of their power? Though they were as mighty as *Leuiathan*, and as mischievous as Dragons, yet when they be dead, as die they must, what cause hath any man to be afraid of them? *Achab* minded great matters against *Micaiah* at his returne in peace from *Ramoth Gilead*; but God minded to preferue *Micaiah* by defeating *Achab* of a peaceable returne from thence. Let *Hezechiah*, and all his people, saith *Zenacherib* trust to it, that I will speed them at my next coming to Ierusalem: but God had appointed that he should come no more that way, but be drawne by the snowt like a fish, or led with a bridle like a beast to the shambles, and slaughter at *Nineue*. The Egyptians were resolved to pursue Israel vntil they ouertooke them, & to put them to the sword when they caught them, and to take the spoile of their goods, when they had slaine them: but the waters were first to pursue themselves, & death to ouertake them, and the sea to haue the spoile of their bodies, and hell to make a pray of their soules.

1. King. 22.

Isai. 36. 12.

and 3. 29

Verf. 8. *The iust escapeth out of trouble, and the wicked shall come in his stead.*

Gods fauour & goodnes doth not free his seruants from afflictions, but deliuereth them out of afflictions. Whereinto he casteth the wicked, though they be not alwaies of the same kind with those which the godly suffer, but worse and more durable, and such as are mixed with Gods wrath, & poisoned with the sting of their owne euill conscience.

Though the afflictions of good men seem sharp, & grieuous yet they are not perpetuall. *Doct.*

Before euer God bring his into troubles, hee appointeth how they shall be preferued in them, and passe thorough them, & get out of them. He doth as well foresee their arriual, as their launching forth, and the end of the boisterous stormes which they must indure, aswel as the beginning and entrance thereof. *Many* or great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth him out of all. Neither number, nor grieuousnesse, nor continuance of crosses, nor power of persecutors, nor any other impediment

Psalm. 31. 19.

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ment can hinder his hand from helping his distressed seruants.

Reasons.

First, they will keepe no silence when they be in tribulatioⁿ, they will cry vnto God, and bemoane their case vnto him, that he may rake their cause into his hands. Neither is it any waiwardnes in them, but wisdome, and their bounden duty so to do: for he calleth them vnto him, and commandeth them to make their complaint: *Call vpon me, saith he, in the day of trouble: so will I deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* Psal. 50. 15.

2

Secondly, all Gods people are petitioners for euery one, and euery one for all: so that no member of Iesus Christ wanteth friends to sollicite his cause, and to deale effectually for him.

3

Thirdly, the Lord himselfe beholdeth their teares, and sorrowes, and suffrings, hee heareth their most secret sighes and groanes, his compassion is towards them: hee is able to helpe them, hee promiseth to deliuer them, and therefore from his owne commiseration and pity, by his might and power, and in his trueth and fidelity hee will surely draw them out of misery.

4

Lastly, their life it selfe is not perpetuall, but short & of small continuāce, & therfore how can it be that their troubles should be endles, or any way of long durance? It is an euerlasting truth which the holy spirit publisheth in the Reuelation of S. Iohn: *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: for they rest from their labours*, that is from all kinds of sorrowes and sufferings.

Reue. 14. 13.

1st c.

Reproofe of their folly which seek to preuent troubles, or to shake them off by shūning the duties of righteousness. As though righteousness were not a sure friend to deliuer men, but a trecherous aduersary to betray them. As though it were a matter of great perill to please God, and the only way for safety to prouoke him. As though the best means of defence were to disarm ones selfe, and to be weaponed and armed, were to expose himselfe to the shot and strokes of his enemy. And yet this cowardly heart, and erroneous mind is in very many, that they dare not addiect themselues strictly to euery seruice of piety and iustice, least they should cast themselues into snares, and troubles, and molestations. They are not perswaded by S. Peters testimony, that no man can hurt thē, if they follow that which is good, nei-
ther

1. Pet. 3. 13. 14.

ther be they affected with his consolation, that blessed are they, if they suffer for righteousness sake.

Comfort to them that are tossed with the waues of troubles, and aduersities by persecutions, temptations, and necessities, if searching their hearts they can find their vprightnes, and trying their waies they proue to be righteous; there is no cause why they shold cal in question the state of their soules, or think their present case to be irrecoverable. If multitude or greatnes of troubles were to make Gods fauour doubtfull, then few iust men should haue it certaine: for he hath allotted them to all his children, & made as due prouision for them of correctiō, as of food: and he that is alwaies, and altogether without it, is not a sonne, but a bastard. If it were not an vsuall thing for good men to be in afflictions, the scriptures would not so vsuallly speak of their comming out of afflictions. Let no man therefore say in prosperity, I shall neuer be moued: so let no godly man say in aduersity, I shall neuer be restored. The Lord taketh as litle pleasure to be euermore afflicting his people, as a most tender-hearted parent doth to be alwaies beating his children. And as an indulgent father cannot indure to see violence offered to the shedding of his sonnes blood in his presence: so neither will our GOD permit the wicked to spoile and oppresse the godly continually in his sight.

2

Heb. 12. 8.

Psalm. 30. 6.

When the mercy of God beginneth to raise the godly out of afflictions, his iustice is ready to cast the wicked into misery. The sinners are put into one scale of the weights, and the Saints into the other. When the one riseth vp, the other sinketh downe: when the one commeth from troubles to prosperity, the other goeth from prosperity to troubles. This the Lord telleth wicked men before hand, and will not faile to fulfill it in due season. Behold, saith he, *my seruants shall eate, and ye shall be hungrie: behold, my seruants shall drinke, and ye shall be thirstie: behold, my seruants shall reioice, and yee shall be ashamed: behold my seruants shall sing for ioy of heart, and ye shall crie for sorrow of heart, and shall howle for vexation of mind.* It seemeth to them an incredible paradox, and a newes by far more admirable, then acceptable, that there should be such a transmutation of conditions on both sides, to

Isai. 65. 11. 14.

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contraries:

contraries; but he doth know that it will be so, & can effect that it shall be so, and hath decreed that it must be so, & therefore relateth the particulars with such certainty, as if forthwith the execution thereof should be presented to their senses.

Reasons.

1. *Pet. 4. 17.*

First, it is Gods ordinance, and the order which he vseth in his proceedings, that iudgement shall begin at his owne house, as *S. Peter* teacheth, and from thence be deriued to the wicked to continue vpon them for euer. The medicinable potion, at the brimme of the cup, he will haue his owne children to drinke for their health and preferuation, but the dregges and poison at the bottome, his enenies must swallow vp for their ruine & destruction.

2 Secondly, troubles, feares, vexations, and torments are the proper portion of sinners, they receiue not their childes part, nor enter vpon their inheritance, till they fall into them. Good men passe through them, as a deepe miry lane in a strange country, but trauell home to their owne pleasant soile of comfort; but the euill and rebellious, gallop swiftly in the faire way of prosperity and hasten to their own yncomfortable home of hideous desolation and horror.

3 Thirdly, their malicious behaiour against Christians, doth with a strong hand draw themselues into misery, and lift the others out of it. The Egyptians made it their exercise to drowne the children of the Israelites, and God deliuering the Israelites made the Egyptians to be drowned. *Haman* cast about with all his wits, how he might bring *Mordecai* to the gallows, and the Lord appointed in his wisdome that the gallows should catch vp *Haman*. And so stood the case with *Daniels* enemies, they were driuen with their owne flesh and family to feed the Lyons which they had appointed to eate vp *Daniel*. The Edomites were glad to see the Iewes drink so bitter a draught of calamity as the Babylonians by Gods righteous iudgement had mingled for them; and therefore the Lord would make the Edomites to pledge them in the same cup, and was more fauourable to the Iewes for their reioycing at them. For so hee speaketh to them both in the *Lamentations*: Reioyce, and be glad O daughter Edome that dwellest in the land of *Vz*, the cup also shall passe through vnto thee:

thee: thou shalt be drunken and vomit. Thy punishment is accomplished, O daughter Zion: he will no more carrie thee into captiuitie. *Lam. 4. 21.*

The doing of mischief to good men, the attempting of it, though they faile of their purposes, their wishing of it, though they dare not attempt it, and their reioycing at it when it is effected by others, all this doth assuredly bring mischief on sinfull mens owne heads.

Admonition to the aduersaries of the Church, and Christians, that they deale more mildly and moderately with them. The case is their owne, they prepare for themselves whatsoeuer they impose vpon others. The burdens which they lay vpon their neighbors shoulders must be transferred to their owne backs: the bread of affliction which they prouide for their brethren, in time will turne to their owne foode: the little ease and dungeon wherein they shut vp the innocent, must in time bee made their owne habitation.

Terror to vngodly persons in regard of their dangerous condition. Onely troubles they flie from, fearing them more then any manner of sinne, and therefore account the life of afflicted Christians to be most miserable: and trouble is that which flyeth as fast after them to make a pray of them, which also will make their state ten thousand times worse then any Christians can be. And if it so come to passe in this life, as many times it doth, that the godly are lifted vp to prosperity, and the vngodly into grieuous aduersity, what a change will there be, and contrariety of their estates in the life to come. Which appeareth in the parable of the rich man, and *Lazarus*. Here the rich man receiued his pleasure and *Lazarus* paine: but there is *Lazarus* in heauen, and the rich man in hell: *Lazarus* is in *Abrahams* bosome, and the rich man in the flames of fire: *Lazarus* is comforted, and the rich man tormented. The best man in his best state here on earth, hath not a full enlargement, but onely enioyeth liberty of the prison: and the worst man in his worst state is not yet come to execution, but onely sitteth in the stocks. But the most perfect and absolute difference and change will be at the day of the Lord Iesus, when soule and body of the saints shall bee filled with glory and immortality,

mortality, and soule and body of sinfull creatures shall be ouerwhelmed with shame, and perpetuall contempt. And herewith the Apostle comforteth the poor persecuted Thessalonians; *It is a righteous thing with God, saith he, to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you which are troubled rest with vs, when the Lord Iesus Christ shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mighty Angels, &c.* 2. Theff. 1. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

3

Consolation to poore helpless persons, if they bee also harmles, that can find no friends which wil or can procure them deliuerance out of troubles. Few good are to be found that take to heart the sufferings of poore innocents, and few of those that take them to heart, are able to preuaile any thing for them. But are there no wicked which may be heard of? Haue they no enemies which doe molest them? Alas, there be too many of these euery where, the world swarmeth with them. Then be of good comfort, you must come forth that they may come in, the place must be yeelded vp to the right owners. Cannot ye get a release freely? will not intreaty worke your liberty? A price then shall be giuen, a ranfome shall be payd for it, and you shall be discharged. For such a promise we haue from God in this booke: *the wicked shall be a ranfome for the iust, and the transgressor for the righteous.*

Prou. 21. 18.

Verse. 9. *A hypocrite with his mouth corrupteth his neighbour: but the righteous shall be deliuered by knowledge.*

Dissembles, and such as make a shew of godlinesse, but deny the power thereof, are commonly most hurtful seducers, corrupting mens hearts with hurtfull speeches, either deprauing that which is good, or iustifying that which is euill, and so they infect their minds with erroneous opinions, and stirre vp their hearts to sinfull lusts, and peruert their waies with vngodly behauour. But now to preuent the feares of the good, that they also are like to be drawn into mischief, because there are so many hypocrits, and to take away the cloaks and shifts from the wicked, which lay all the blame of their sins on others which mislead them, hee sheweth the meanes whereby this hurt may bee auoyded,

auoyded, and that is, by getting knowledge, and being righteous.

Vngodly men are neuer more mischieuous then when they put on the vizzard of godlines. Though this may be proued by manifold testimonies, as well out of the old testament as the new, yet we will rather exemplifie it by the experience of the times, then by allegations of scriptures. Through all the books before Christ, the false prophets are almost euery where complained of. In the time of our Sauior, the Priests, Scribes, and Pharises of all others were his bitterest enemies. The Apostles found none so dangerous as false Apostles, and such as took vpon them to bee professors and preachers. *Paul, Peter, Iude and Iohn* are most ample in giuing admonitiōs to beware of them. Ever since that time there haue been springs, streames, floods, and seas of superstition; idolatry, violence, and all abomination in the kingdom of Antichrist: and all vnder pretence of the Churches authority, zeale, deuotion and good intendment.

Doff. 1.

First, such are very forward and busie in this seruice of Sathan (for diligent they are not to be esteemed, vnles they were better exercised) and therefore the more hurt and mischief they doe. That *Jeremy* obserued in the wicked deceiuers of his age, *that they taught their tongues to speake lies, and tooke great paines to do wickedly.* And that our Sauior reprooued in the curled Scribes, & Pharises of his age, *that they compassed sea and land to make one of their profession: and when he was made they made him twofold more the child of hell then themselves.*

Reasons.

Ierem. 9. 5.

Math. 23. 15.

Secondly, they are very deceitfull, and cunning: and therefore the scriptures compare them to crafty gamesters, and fowlers, which catch more birds artificially by lime-twigs, grinnets, and nets, then they kill violently by throwing stones at them. Of these guilefull persons the Apostle speaketh, saying: *such false Apostles are deceitfull workers, and transforme themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marueil: for Satā is transformed into an Angell of light. Therefore it is no great thing, though his ministers transforme themselves, as though they were the ministers of righteousness.*

2

2. Cor. 11. 13.

They are the more venomous, by how much they are lesse

mistrusted for the opinion that is had of them for piety & goodness, doth prepare a passage for their poyson, to enter into the bowels of mens soules. When they are reputed for godly, religious, wise, and iudicious, all is receiued which they set abroach, all is disliked which they set against. It is an easie matter for a man to loose his purse, when he followeth the robber as guide of his way. It is an easie matter for a man to loose his life, when he maketh a poysoner, and his enemy to be his Physition.

Vse. 1.

Instruction to be very wary that their pestilent breath infect not our hearts, to keep our eares fro hearkning to their persuasions, as much as we would refrain from one that had the plague fore vpon him. When Woolues will put on Sheep skins, when thornes will take vpon them to be vines, when thistles will be fig trees, and euill workers haue the place of Prophets, then our Sauour admonisheth vs to look to our selues, and take heed of them.

2

Secondly, consolation if wee corrupt not others with our tongues; but rather vse the to heale the corrupted, this declareth that we are neither openly wicked in behaiour, nor secretly hypocriticall in heart: for a holesome tongue is euermore a certain note of an vpright conscience.

Dott. 2.

But the righteous, &c. Though the tongue of the wicked bee a deadly weapon to doe hurt: yet the knowledge of the godly is a defensiu armor to preserue him from it. The medicine which Saint Peter doth prescribe, with his caueat to auoide the delusions of subtil seducers, doth after a sort make a promise of remedy against them, to such as shal carefully receiue it. *Beware* (saith he) *least ye be plucked away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your owne stedfastnes. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ.* 2. Pet. 3. 17. 18.

Reasons. 1.

First, Ignorance is that which giueth entertainment to errors, and all sound knowledge excludeth them out of doores. Whome doth the foolish womā, or folly her selfe cal to her feast, but *such as are simple*? Whom doth she vtter her mind vnto, but to *such as are destitute of vnderstanding*? And whom do the lurking corner creepers so much pray vpon as *simple women laden with sinnes and lead with diuers lusts*?

Prou 9. 16.

Secondly,

Secondly, men of knowledge haue their wits exercised to discern between good and euill, between light and darknes, between the seruants of God, and the workers of iniquity. They beare the image of God: and therefore know the image of God where it is, and see the defects of it where it is not. They carry a light within them whereby they are able to discouer the doctrines of fallshood, which are contrary to the trueth, and the works of darknes which are contrary to holines, and therefore can reiect them both.

Thirdly the sound knowledge of Christians, is not onely a shield to warde off all detestable errors, and damnable here lies, that they seduce not the mind, but also a preseruatiue to expel all flattering inticements, and sinfull suggestions that they corrupt not the heart. And that the holy Ghost doth expressly promise in this book, *to every one that doth loue, and labour for knowledge. When wisdome entresth into thine heart, and knowledge delieth thy soule, then shall counsell preserue thee, and vnderstanding shall keep thee and deliuer thee from the euill way, & from the man that speaketh froward things, and from them that leaue the waies of righteousness, to walke in the waies of darknesse: which reioyce in doing euill, and delight in the frowardnesse of the wicked.* Prouer. 2. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.

Encouragement to vse diligence by all good meanes, in all Gods ordinances appointed to that end, to get vnderstanding and righteousness, since our need thereof is so great, and the vse so good. Neither wealth, nor wit, nor any other thing, can stand vs in so good steed for the preseruatiue of our hearts, as these doe. For they all without those are trecherous and deceitfull, ready alwaies to betray vs, and open the dores to let in flattery and corruption: but these haue faithfulness and courage, and power, & constancy, to stand for the defence of our soule to the end.

Though there should come neuer so many bands, and armies of Satanicall & hellish hypocrites, and euery mans mouth were a musket, or cannon to send out most mortal, and deadly poyson, yet if we be armed with these graces, we need not to feare them. The Antichristian deceiuer cannot illude them that haue received

1. The. 1. 10.

Math. 24. 24.

Ephes. 6.

3

ued the knowledge and loue of the truth. The false Christs shall not deceiue the elect, as being protected by Gods power, & furnished with holy vnderstanding. The diuell himselfe with all his fiery darts and temptations, shall be resisted and driuen back by those that haue on the brest-plate of righteousness, and the other pieces of Gods complete armour. The Lord Iesus by the sound knowledge of the sacred Scriptures hath already repulsed & turned him to flight, and putteth the same weapon into our hands, with strength and power to pursue him.

Conuiction of them that are drawn away by euery iuglet, & sinfull companion. The Iesuites, and Seminaries, the heretickes, and traytors, may disgorge their stomackes, and vomit vp their venome into their bosomes, & they haue neither hand, nor hart, nor tongue, to reiect them, but suffer themselues to be caried to errors, to heresies, to idolatry, to conspiracies, to treasons, to rebellions, to shamefull executions, to fearefull damnation. Therefore they were not righteous, therefore they wanted knowledge therefore they were naked and destitute of all defensiuie armour. And here come also to be taxed, as friends to corruption, al they that are enuious to vnderstanding, and the means thereof, which thinke it so much the more dangerous to seek for, by how much there are more which go about to deceiue. But this hath been sufficiently spoken of in the sixteenth verse of the ninth chapter, especially in the vse.

Verse 10. *In the prosperity of the righteous the citie reioyceth, and when the wicked perish there is ioy.*

IN the prosperity of the righteous) that is, when things goe well with the, the city reioyceth, that is, the honest and well disposed citizens, and countrimen be inwardly glad, and outwardly declare their ioy, by cheerfull countenance, and speeches, & other meanes, as opportunity serueth to expresse the same. And so doe they also at the death, and ouerthrow of oppressors, and tyrants, and other wicked persons, by whose fall the people rise, and whose ruine is the repaire of the city.

Doct. 1.

Good men haue not onely Gods hand to giue them good things,

things, but godly mens hearts to bee ioyfull for them. When *Mordecai* was aduanced the city of *Shushan* reioyced and was glad. And when the Lord shewed his great mercy on *Zacharie*, and *Elizabeth* in giuing them a sonne, their kinsfolke and neighbours came and reioyced with them.

Hest. 8. 15.

Luk. 1. 58.

First, the prouidence of God hath the disposing of all mens affections: he deriucth their loue, and their hatred, their liking, & loathing to euery one, as seemeth best to his owne wisedome. And he hath appointed by decree in his counsell: by precept in his word; and by working of his spirit that godly men shall bee well affected towards the godly, and Christians shall bee tender hearted one towards another.

Reasons.

Secondly, they are all members of one body, and therefore a sympathy, & fellow feeling of one anothers state is mutually among them; *If one suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be bad in honour, all the members reioyce with it.* 1. Cor. 12. 26.

2

Thirdly, it is well knowne that righteous men will make their brethren commoners with them in their prosperity. When they are aduanced, others shal not be disgraced thereby, but honoured: when they are enriched, others shall not bee impouerished thereby, but relieued: when they are made mighty, others shall not be weakned thereby, but supported. And so it is said concerning *Mordecaie*, that when the royall apparell was on his back, and the crowne of gold on his head, that vnto the Iewes was come light, and ioy, and gladnes, and honour. Hest. 8. 16.

3

Now all this is contrary in the state of harmfull persons, when God declareth his anger by casting the downe, the people publish their ioy by clapping their hands at them. At the least Gods seruants for Gods glory, their owne peace, and the publike safety, take comfort in this mercy that is shewed to the Church, in taking away such enemies. God inclineth their hearts to do this and the cruelty of the enemy hath procured it, as the effects of both did manifest at the drowning of *Pharaoh*, & destruction of *Sisera*.

Instruction to them that bee desirous to possesse the hearts of honest men, that they gaine them by iustice, and vpright behaviour, by mercy, kindnes, and goodnes. This course will draw

verse. 1.

Hest. 10. 3.

their desires to wish well vnto them: this wil put arguments in- to their mouthes to speak well for them: this will giue them in- couragement to further their aduancement: this will make their promotion acceptable to them, & then desirous of the continu- ance and increase of the same. Now many men desire to be po- pular, but few to be righteous: it is easie to affect the greatnesse of *Mordecai*, who was second to the King, and greate among his people, & accepted among the multitude of his brethren: but it is hard to follow his goodnes in *procuring their wealth, and seeking their peace, & prosperity*. Good liking is not gotten by pomp & power, and fauor is not gained with wealth and riches, and loue is not commanded by authority, and dignity: these may be al- lured with goodnes, but neuer compelled by violence.

2

Dan. 6.

Reprooffe of enuious persons, that maligne the good estate of godly Christians: they reioyce not at their prosperity like wor- thy Citizens, but grieue, and vexe at it, like barbarous aiantes: Either they labour to keep them vnder that they shall not rise, or to vndermine them that they shall not stand, as appeareth in the example of *Daniels* aduerfaries. But all is in vaine: they shall bee frustrate of their purpose, they shal be foiled in their practise, they shall be ashamed, and cursed, & plagued for their malicious harts and mischieuous enterprises. *They that hate Zion, shal all be asha- med and turned backward. They shall be as the grasse on the house tops, which withereth afore it commeth forth.* 129. 5. 6.

Doct. 2.

The city reioyceth, &c. Godly men are the chiefe inhabitants wheresoeuer they dwell.

They that reioyce at the prosperity of the righteous, are called the city, the place hath denomination from them: and It is cer- tain that nelther al, nor the most, nor in many places the greatest are so wel affected, but contrary minded. So it is said in the book of *Hester* that when the decree was gone forth, whereby all the Jewes were proscribed and destinated to death, that the ci- ty of Shustan was in perplexity. Who was this city there but the poore condemned Israelites, who from their first comming thither were but strangers and captiues? *Ahasuerus*, and *Ha- man* were not of the number, for they were merriy drinking of wine: and a great number both in the Court, and City, as it may appeare,

appear, were glad of their misery. So saith the Apostle to the Romanes, Your faith is published throughout the whole world, meaning thereby in all the Churches.

Rom. 1. 8.

First, they haue a good estate in their goods, and hold their liuings by a right tenure, through Iesus being inheritors of the earth, whereas none else are so much as tenants at will by any right or warrant from God, but meere vsurpers intruding themselves without any allowance into his possessions.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, all others are aliens in Gods account, & only their vnderlings & seruants. For so he speaketh of such as hold themselves to be masters and commanders of many others. *The strangers shall stand and feede your sheepe, and the sons of strangers shall be your plow men, and dressers of your vines.* Isai 61. 5.

2

Consolation to them that haue the testimony of the faithfull, and approbation of godly Christians in their behauiour. It is as good as if all the towne and country did commend them. And that was S. Iohns meaning, when he said that *Demetrius had a good report of all men*. All wicked men would neuer speak well of him, or if they should, it had been little for his credit: but forasmuch as the Apostle testifieth of him, and the truth it selfe also, it must needs be that those *all men* were all good men which knew his goodnes.

Vse.

3. 1. h. ver. 1.

Terror for them that haue the complaint of Gods seruants against them. Though they be magnified of the multitude, and applauded of neuer so many wicked, they shall neither haue true honour, nor sound comfort thereby. The voices of Christians will carry the cause, and their verdict is that which will cast the faulty, if they conuict, the Lord will condemn: for they neuer agree all to find any guilty, but where the word of God, and his spirit haue first giuen in euidence against them. It went hard with *Zenacherib* when God told him that *Zion* despised him, & laughed him to scorne, and shook her head at him. But what cared he for that? Did not he despise her as much? True it is, that he despised her as much, but not with so much danger to her. His was a vaine, foolish, absurd, and contemptible contempt, like paper shot against a strong bulwarke: but hers was mighty, and effectually carrying force with it, like a Canon against a weake

2

Isai. 37. 22.

cottage which will shake it to peeces in a moment.

Verse II. *By the blessing of the righteous the city is exalted: but it is subverted by the mouth of the wicked.*

THe meaning is, that iust men are very beneficial to the societies of men by their religious, prudent, and profitable speeches: for so the word *blessing* signifieth in many places: and so it is here ment as the antithesis sheweth: and so a poor man in aduersity, may as well be an instrument of good to his country, as a rich man in prosperity, as *Salomon* testifieth, Eccle. 9. 15. On the other side, the wicked with his mouth and hurtfull words, doth worke mischief among whom he conuerseth.

Doct.

By the blessing, &c.) A godly man will alwaies do good to the place where he dwelleth, that many shall fare the better for him.

The land of Iudah found the truth of this by comfortable experience in the daies of their good Kings, and Prophets, as *Iehosaphat*, *Hezekias*, *Isaiah* and others, who obtained wonderfull deliuerances for their people at the hand of the Lord. The land of Israel found the truth of it in the daies of their holy Prophets *Eliab* and *Elisba*, who procured help against drowth, famine, and enemies, and therefore were called the chariots, & horsemen of Israel. What should I speake of *Ioseph*, of *Moses*, and *Samuel*, and *Dauid*, of *Nehemiah*, and *Ezra*, of *Hester*, and *Mordecai*, and many others, among whom *S. Paul* must be of the *Quorum*, as one of eminent note, specially of that marueilous preservation of al that sailed in the shippe, with him, notwithstanding they were very infidels.

Reasons.

First, he will preferre the welfare of the publike state, before his owne priuate aduantage and profit. When *Moses* might haue continued a fauorite, he voluntarily for his brethrens sake incurred the Kings displeasure: when he might haue been great in Aegypt, he rather forsooke Aegypt: when he might haue liued in credit, pleasure, and plenty like a prince, he chose to liue obscurely, painfully, and hardly as a shepheard. When *Hester* was bid to ask, and haue to the halfe of an ample & large empire she set aside all respect of lands and liuings, and only craued the liues of her people.

Secondly,

Secondly, he will apply his tongue to all those meanes whereby he may best effect his desire, and profit his neighbours: by prayers, by counsels, by exhortations, and encouragements, and specially by striving against the sinnes that are among them.

Gods blessing vpon him, doth make his blessing prosperous to others. For wicked men many times doe speede the better for the fauour of the Lord which dooth accompany his seruants. *Laban* knew, and acknowledged, that therein he was much beholden to *Iacob*, not only for his faithfulness and paines, but for the good effect and successe of them. *Iosephs* master, and *Iosephs* keeper, and *Pharaohs* house, and all the land of Egypt sped the better for the goodnes of God towards *Ioseph*. On the other side in the sinfull person, euery thing is otherwise. His tongue and talke is hurtfull and noysome. He is wholly carried with selfeloue, and priuate lucre. All his endeauiours be to accomplish his owne wicked purposes, and his meanes thereunto be vnlawfull and hurtfull. As he by rebellion hath prouoked the wrath of God against himselfe, so is the curse sent out after him, and bringeth a iudgement many times vpon the place where he is, and the people that are about him, and the Country wherein he liueth.

Instruction to vse all kindnes to godly men, since we enioy so great a blessing by them. If they helpe to exalt the City, let them be also exalted in the City, or be well spoken of, or haue good affection borne vnto them: at the least beware that they be not iniuriously oppressed. The vnreasonable creatures which are commodious to the owners, will euery wise man be willing to haue, and carefull to keep well. The insensible trees which bring forth plenty of good fruit, are husbandry dresse, and heedfully preserved, that nothing doe barke the body, nor browse vpon the branches, nor breake downe the boughes. And shall not faithfull men be regarded, which doe more good in better manner to greater numbers, for longer continuance? God forbid that we should be so vnthankfull, as to requite euill for good: or so improuident, as to hinder our good by requiring of euill: or so foolish and franticke as to ouerturne our former good, and change it wholly into euill and mischief. For that is the cunct

I. rem. 18. 10.

that commonly ensueth vpon such as deale vnkindly with those who deale kindly with them. This caused *Jeremy* to turne his petitions into accusations, and his intercessions into imprecations *Shall euill be recompenced for good: for they haue digged a pit for my soule: Remember that I stood before thee to speake good for them, and to turne away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliuer vp their children to famine, and let them drop away by the force of the sword, &c.*

2

Isai 59. 7.

Reprehension of such as are spoilers of their cities, and not exalters; which ruinate townes, and cities, and countries, but erect nothing but their own houses (habitations they are not properly to be called, because they seldome dwell in them) and those they make sumptuous for pride and ostentation. Of such the Prophet speaketh when he saith, that *desolation & destruction are in their pathes: they make hauocke of all that commeth within their walke, and lay all waste before them.* And here the Iesuits, and Seminaries, & the whole crue of these vnnatural, barbarous and cruel Papiests are to be condemned, which doe as greedily thirst after the bloud of their King, & countrimen, and the subuersion of the kingdome and country, as any forraign enemies in their greatest hostility are possibly able.

Verse 12. *He that is destitute of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of vnderstanding will keep silence.*

A Foolish man which hath a beggerly hart, as the words signifie, being voide of sound iudgement, & sanctified knowledge of Gods holy wil, desireth to vilifie others, especially such as feare God, and to make them appeare base and contemptible. And this is done sometimes in bitter anger, by rayling, reuiling, and contumelious reproches; and sometimes in scurrill mirth, by girding iests, and laughter; and sometimes in hidden craft, by false reports and slanders. But they which haue more wisdom, will frame themselues to better behauiour: they will not onely keepe silence from offering that indignity to them that prouoke them not thereunto, but will also forbear to requite them with reproaches, which haue not spared to seek their disgrace. For so doth

doth *David* testifie of himself in this case: *I am as a man that heareth not, and as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.* *Pla.* 38. 13.

They which are the most contemptible persons, are the greatest contemners of others. As wisdom above all other things doth make a man to be excellent, so needs must the want of it make him to be base: and yet such as come not only too short of the perfection, but not at all to the beginning thereof, are ready to sport at them which are most graced with it. *When the wicked commeth, saith Salomon, then commeth contempt, and with the vile man, reproach.* None scoffed so much at *David* as the abjects, and the drunkards made songs of him. None mocked *Iob* so much as the vagabonds who were no better then their fathers, & their fathers not so good as dogges. *They were the children of fooles, and the children of villaines, which were more vile then the earth. And yet he was their song, and their talke, they spared not to spit in his face.* *Iob.* 30. 1. 8. 9. 10. *Prou.* 18. 3. *Psalm.* 35. 15.

First, where wisdom is wanting, there pride aboundeth (as an empty stomack is full of winde) and pride bringeth disdainfulness, because they conceive of wonders in themselves, and discern of nothing but wants in others. The blind bragging Pharisee was not ashamed to come into Gods own presence, to depraue the humble poore Publicane, who was incomparably the better man. *Reasons.* *Luk.* 18. 9. 11.

Secondly, they are despisers of God himselfe, reiecting his counsell, and casting his word behind their backes, and therefore it is no strange thing that they shold offer despite to mortal men. 2

Thirdly, contempt is in al equity, their own due portion, and God hath appointed in his iudgements, that they shall recouer their right to themselves, by making an offer of it to others. 3

Confutation of them which take it to be the fruit of their wisdom, and ripenes of their wit, to haue a dexterity in breaking of iests vpon men to make them to be laughed at. So far they think they shew the rarenes of their vnderstanding, as they can make men to feel the keenness of their tongues. But God which best knoweth who be wise, and what is wisdom, doth charge them to be vnwise, and void of wisdom. He to whom it belongeth *Vse. 11.*

to conuince fooles, and to punish them, doth marshall these among the great fooles that shall be punished.

2

Isai 51. 7. 8.

Instruction as to keepe our selues from the society of such companions, vnlesse we be duely called into place; so not to be disinaied, though in our callings, and for wel doing, they shoot their bolts at vs. Their strongest arrowes are but strawes, and their strongest archers are but dwarfs and Pigmees. The Lord himselfe doth animate vs against the greatest of them by the Prophet: *Fear ye not, saith he, the reproache of men, neither be ye afraid of their rebukes. For the moath shall eat them up like a garment, and the worme shall eat them like wooll.* If a worme, and a maggot will prooue stronger then they, and get the victory of them, why should their words be more regarded then wormes, and maggots? Ideots, and naturals we care not, for though they should raile vpon vs, and giue reuiling speeches: poore creatures they are to be pitied, they wāt wit, they know not what they say: and why then should these be so much respected, which are to be lamented for want of wisdome, and say they know not what?

Ver. 13. *He that goeth about as a talebearer, discovereth a secret, but he that is of a faithfull heart, concealeth a matter.*

IN this place, and in the nineteenth of Leuiticus verse 16. and else where the holy Ghost compareth busi-bodies, and such as delight to deale in other mens matters, to petty chapmen, and pedlers, which carry wares about, selling in one place, & buying in another, and two marks of lewdnes he brandeth them with, as first, that they haue false and vnfaithfull hearts: and then that they haue loose and blabbing tongues that can keepe no counsell, but tell all that they heare. They will draw on men by their newes and reports to open their minds and secrets vnto them, which after they will publish to others. From both which vices he cleareth all good men, their harts are faithfull, & their tongues are silent to couer such matters as loue requireth them to hide, & duty and conscience do not bind them to lay open.

Doct.

A slanderous tongue will be as ready to defame them whom

it

speakeſh vnto,as whom it ſpeakeſh againſt. It traffiketh altogether by exchange, it will deliuer nothing to you, but vpon condition to receiue ſomewhat from you. It will neuer beare an empty pack, but deſireth where ought is vttered, and taken out, there to take ſomewhat to be put in, that it may haue choiſe for other places. This is the cauſe why the Lord forbiddeth to chaffer, or to haue any dealing at all with ſuch māner of perſons, though they make ſhew of neuer ſo great loue and kindnes towards vs. *He that goeth about as a ſlanderer, diſcouereth ſecrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.* PROU. 20. 19.

First, the ſame cauſe that moueth him to relate other mē's affaires to thee, will likewise induce him to diſcouer thine to other men: and that is want of loue, a deſire to be plauſible in ſatisfying itching eares, and hypocriſie, making reſemblance to hate thoſe faults which he cenſureth in others.

Secondly they haue beene trained vp in that trade, and therefore cannot leaue it: neither will they at any time neglect their markets for any mans ſake.

Thirdly, they haue not the power, and gouernment of their owne tongues, but Sathan hath, whoſe gunpowder they are, and if he put fire vnto them, they cannot chuſe but take. And that S. Iames meaneth when he ſaith, *that the tongue is ſet on fire on hell,* that is, by the diuell that helliſh ſpirit. Iam. 3. 6. Now he is a continuall falſe accuſer, and makebate between God and man, and man, and man, and friend and neereſt friend, and therefore looke for no fauour at his hands.

Inſtruction: First if wee would be truſted, and haue men impart their minds vnto vs without ſuſpition of vs, let vs auoide the diſcourſes of other mens infirmities, and labour rather to pray for them, and heale them. If we deſire that any man ſhould powre his counſels into our eares: let him not ſee another mans dropping out of our mouthes: for then he may eaſily know what will become of his owne. 2. To be wary to whom we commit our ſecrets: not to buſie talkers, not to idle walkers, not to them that are hollow harted. If they be briars, and thornes, as *Micah* calleth them, if they carry prickles in their mouthes, and guile in their ſoules, and ſinne in their liues, truſt them not, put not confidence

Reasons.

2

3

Mica. 7. 5.

dence in them, keep shut the dores of thy lips from thē, though they were friends, though they were counsellours, though they were yoke-fellows. Especially let vs not cōmunicate with them in giuing them hearing of their vncharitable obtractions, nor trust them in our secrets: for it were iust and righteous that they should be disclosed and brought to light for a recompēce of our rash and vnloving credulity.

Ver. 14. *Where no counsell is, the people fall: but where many counsellours are, there is health.*

WHere there is counsell) Where godly & holy instruction for guiding the hart and behauiour, & graue & prudent aduice for gouernment of state, eicher domestical, or publike, do faile, there *the people do fall*, that is, the gouernors themselues, & they that are in subiection to them, do run into many mischiefes of grievous disorders, & miserable destruction. For what in that case is to be expected frō superiours, but violence & oppression? And what from inferiours, but falshood and disobedience? And what from all sorts, but impiety and wickednes? And what then from God, but heauy strokes and punishments? *But where many counsellors are*, which be faithfull, and giue wise and wholesome counsell, & that is also imbraced & followed, there is helth, that is, religion and iustice, peace, plenty, & safety, which aggrauate Gods gracious fauour and blessing.

Doct.

Nothing is more necessary and profitable to any state then good counsell, where this is wanting, there the beauty and brightnesse of authority is away. The multitude of men, the wealth of the people, the strength of munition, and the mighty force of armes will little auaille, if wise men be not employed in the weighty affairs. And this caused *Salomon* to make such comparifons, that lowly and submisse words of a poore wise man, are more to be regarded, then the crie of an vnwise ruler, with his foolcs about him: and that wisdom is better then strength, and also then weapons of warre.

Ecccl. 9. 17. 18.

Reasons. 1.

First, there is no more sufficiency in any one man, by his owne wisdom without the assistance of others, wel to order the matters

ters of a kingdom or state, then for one alone to gouern a great ship, without the helpe of other Sailers or officers. *David* professeth of himselfe, that he was wiser then his enemies, then his teachers, then the ancient, and yet he fought out the most prudent men in all Israell, as *Hushai*, and *Achitophell*, &c. to helpe him with direction. Who euer, but *Christ*, since *Adams* fall, could say that he was as wise as *Salomon*? who hopeth to be so wise? Who can be so wise, vntill the end of the world? and yet he made choise of a counsell to consult with, & to confirme himselfe, and his people by.

Psa. 119. 98. 99

Secondly, it is a mercy of God to a prince & people, to giue them many cies to see with, many cares to heare with, many tongues to speak with, many minds to be in continuall exercise for the benefit, safety and preferuation of the whole state.

2

Thirdly, it is one of his great iudgements, either to take away counsellors from a nation, or to take away wisdom from the counsellours. This was threatned to Ierusalem and *Judah* by *Isaiab*, that the Lord of hostes would deprive them of their stay and strength, the pillars of their country, and the props of their liues, and those were not only bread and drinke, and Warriours, and Iudges, but Prophets also, and the prudent, and the aged, and the counsellors, that so they might be easily cast downe, yea ruined and brought to dust of their own accord. And concerning the other branch, that it should not be taken fro an ordinary and gentle correction to his faithfull children, but a rare and seuerer punishment to his dissembling enemies, he doth aggravate it in another place, and sett it forth in such manner as might make it most fearefull to vs. Behold, saith he, *I will doe a marvellous worke in this people, euen a marvellous worke, and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the vnderstanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* Isa. 29. 14.

3

Isai. 3. 1. 2.

Instruction that the care of our selues, the regard of our friends the loue to our neighbours, our duety to Prince and Country, should stirre vs vp to call vpon God, that as he hath counsel and wisdom, and is wisdom and vnderstanding, so he would store vs with able and learned Ministers for the Church, and wise and prudent states-men for the Common-weale: and that they

Vse. 1.

which are so qualified, may haue their employmēt, & they which are so imploied, may shew themselues faithfull, & they which are faithfull, may also be prosperous. And so a lay mā may be a profitable Church man, and so a priuate person may do good seruice to the King and all his dominions.

2

Reprooſe of ſuch as truſt to themſelues, and their owne wiſedome, and thinke they ſtand in neede of none for their ſoules, they know as much as all the preachers can tell: for their behauiour, when to ſpeake, and when to bee ſilent, what to ſay, and what to conceale; for actions to be performed, or forborne, they haue as much iudgement as any man: for their ſtate how to manage their affaires, and what courſe to take for their gaine, and commodity, they will learne of none of them all, &c. And this is a fault the more to be reprehended, when they contemptuouſly reiect counſel which they may heare, whē they deſpise the counſell of God which is offered vnto them, when like *Pharao*, & *Achab*, they make choiſe of ſuch as ſhall illude and deceiue them. For that is very vſuall and common with many purpoſely to aſſociate themſelues, and harken to ſuch as will quell in them the feare of all Gods admonitions, rebukes, & threatnings, and giue them encouragement to any idolatry, ſuperſtition, impiety, wantonneſſe, vnthriftines, worldlines, and all ſuch euils as their harts are moſt affected vnto. But moſt of all is their ſinne notorious, which do not only reſuſe counſell themſelues, but wiſh and deſire that there were no counſellors to others, eſpecially ſuch as might inform them in the way of God to bring them to ſaluati-on. They complaine of the number of preachers, one is ſufficient for a whole country; they exclaime of the frequency of preaching, one ſermon is enough for halfe a yeare. And of this ſort the bloody traiterous Papiſts are offendours in a high degree. They doe not onely wiſh fewer counſellours, and leſſer ſtore of preaching, but ſeek by violence to effect it, as their practiſes declare. They would in a moment haue deſtroied the King, and all his Cleargy, all his priuy Councell, all his Iudges and Counſell learned in the Lawes, all the great Counſell of Nobility, and Commons aſſembled in Parliament: and afterwards al the godly Miniſters, and Chriſtians throughout the whole kingdome,

Are

Are these the friends of the people? Doe they wish them to bee preserved from perishing? doe they desire and labour for the health of their nation?

Verse 15. *He that is surety for a stranger shall wholly be broken: but he that hateth those that clap hands, is sure.*

Philem. vc. 18

HIs purpose here is to giue men admonition to beware of suretiship: which he doth inferre by two reasons, first from the hurt and danger which they runne into that be not wel aduised therein: and secondly, from the peace and safety which they inioy that heedfully auoyd the perill thereof. Now he doth not absolutely condemne all suretiship (for then would *Paul* haue neuer vndertaken for *Onesimus*) but rashnes onely therein, is that which is here, and in other places reprooued. For it may sometimes be a worke of mercy to become surety, as well as to lend, or giue. By *stranger*, is not meant all, or onely vnknowne persons. For it may fall out to be a duty of Christian loue, that way to helpe & relieue some such as we were neuer before acquainted with, and a neere neighbour, a familiar friend, a kinsman, a brother may in this case be a stranger to vs, when it is not safe to vndertake for him. As first, if there be like to grow detriment to the borrower, as taking mony, or any other commodities vpon hard conditions, and at vnreasonable rates, or for needlesse expences, & vnthriftines, or any way to the hurt of his state or conscience. Secondly, if it tend to the hurt & damage of the lender, that he is in danger to be defeated of his owne, and to sustaine losse by our meanes. If wee our selues are to be intangled by it, the summe and valew of the debt being more then wee are able either to pay, or well to spare: when ones owne creditours by that occasiō, must be defrauded of their due, when our wiues children, and families which haue also an interest in our substance shall be robbed of their portion and maintenance, and bereaued of the fruit of their owne labours. Then he sheweth a remedy against it, to hate such as clappe hands, that is, to hate and feare to be clapper of hands our selues, for the ratifying and confirmation of promises in this vnadvised suretiship, and so we shall bee

safe and sure in this behalfe. Prouided yet, that we take not other courses that be couen-germanes to it, & as dangerous & hurtfull as that is: as negligently without all care and regard to run into debts and arrerages, or ventrously without due consideration of mens faithfulness, and ability, to lend forth our mony, wares, or cattell, and so to put our state into the hands of strangers.

Doct.

A rash surety doth seldome liue in peace without trouble and misery. Such a one, as though crosses were too few, and too slow, doth increase and hasten them to himselfe. He giueth his hand to his neighbour to put strength and weapons into his neighbours hands, to his owne woe and vexation. Hereof hath Salomon spoken already in the sixt chapter: *My sonne, if thou bee surety for thy neighbour, and hast stricken hand with the stranger, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth: thou art euen taken with the words of thine owne mouth.* Before a man doth voluntarily insnare himselfe, he is like a bird that hath the liberty of the whole ayre, to flie whether she will at her pleasure, but after he hath bound himself by promise and couenant, he is like a bird in a net, and in the fowlers hand, that may be killed, or caged, or giuen to children to play with, or otherwise dealt with, according to the fowlers will, and yet the poore bird, is either surprisid in her owne place, or allured by hope of foode to the bayte, not knowing that she is in any perill, whereas the surety doth wilfully cast himselfe into danger, being forewarned of the euent, that would follow, and hath no baite of any gaine, or benefit laid for him.

Prou 6. 1. 3.

Reasons.

1

First, he cannot but liue in great feare and distraction of mind least the party for whom he hath vndertaken, should either faile of fidelity, and purposely cast his debt vpon him, or else should cometo too short of ability, & prooue vn sufficient to discharge it himselfe. So if another be in want, then must he be in woe: If another be vnthrifty, then he must be vn happy: if another be false, then he must needs be brought to a fall.

2

Secondly, God doth often by aprouidence whet the hearts of creditors, and sharpen them against sureties which fall into their hands. And that we should not deceiue our selues in this case, with

with expectation of fauor, he telleth vs what is to be looked for, if we grow too bold and hardy. *Be not thou of them that touch the band, nor among them that are surety for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take thy bed from vnder thee?* PRO. 22. 27. Now this *why should*, is set down by way of threatning, according as it is also in some other places of scriptures, as when *Amaziah* said to the Prophet, *haue they made thee the Kings counsellour? cease thou: why should they smite thee?* And as he giueth a caueat for euery one to take heed of entring into suretiship, or else not to thinke it strange if they feele the smart of it so he granteth a warrant to creditors, to deale roundly with rash sureties, & not to be too sparing of them. *Take his garment*, saith he, *that is surety for a stranger, and a pledge of him for the stranger.*

2. Chro 25. 16.

Thirdly, the misery which he draweth vpon himselfe, when the burden of paiment, and forfeiture shall light vpon his back, will pearce his hart with bitter grieve and sorrow, when his eyes shal behold the spoile of his goods, which either he hath gotten with labour and trauaile, or his friends haue giuen him in loue and kindnes, or his wife hath brought him in hope & expectation: when his eares shall heare the cry of his family and people that are frighted with terrors, and bitten with hunger, & staruen with cold, and pinched with al kinds of want and penury. When his bones and whole body shall be restrained from his house & household, from vocation and calling, from friends, from recreations and comforts, from liberty and freedome, and clapt vp in a clofe and loathsome prison.

Reproofe of them that thinke it neither sinfull against God nor hurtfull to themselves, but a point of good fellowshippe to yeeld to any mans request in such a matter. They take it to be the easiest way to gratifie a friend, & least painful and chargeable to giue their word for him, yea and bloud also, if they be therto required, as though the charges stood onely in bestowing their breath, and their paines, in putting their hand & seale to the obligation. And who are most forward this way, but such as haue least care to performe their promise? And whome doe they so readily vndertake for, as those that be shifters, & most vnable to keepe touch with their creditors? And as it falleth out in borrowing,

rowing, so it commeth to passe in bayling, that bad prisoners haue seldome better sureties, and men that be greatly offensive, most commonly offer their word for grievous offendours. And many times they are caught, and brought into the trappe, their deare friends of whom they had so good opinion, do giue them the slip, and leaue them in the lurch, and then they clamour, and crie out, yet only against the vnfaithfulnesse of the man whome they beleeeued so well, but not against their own vnfaithfulnesse, which would not beleeeue God who forewarned them of the perill. Nay they still clear themselues, though their own folly conuince them, they giue commendations of their owne course, though friends, and family, though Gods testimony, and their owne woful experience condemn them. Their loue, they say, and friendship, their good nature, and kind heart hath wrought them all that sorrow. Nay, rather it was cruelty, and vnmereifulnesse to your owne house. It was rashnes, a bad nature, and a foolish hart that brought you into this misery. Haue you desperatly thrown your selues into a quick sand, & will you lay all the blame vpon others for your sticking in the mire?

2

Defence of them which are not flexible to serue euery mans turne with bond & couenants, but will first know the person for whom they make their promise, and bee acquainted with his truth and honesty, and with his state and hability; and consider also of their owne sufficiency, whether they can without any great difficulty, discharge that which they take vpon the, if their neighbour should faile. But this is want of good neighborhood say they. But this is a point of good wisdom, saith God, who neuer alloweth that neighborhood for good, which swaructh from holy discretion. His commandement is: Thou shalt loue thy neighbor as thy selfe, and therefore no man is bound to loue him more then himselfe, especially when it is with hatred of himself, and hurt of many others. And indeed it is no work of true loue, but of fleshly friendship: for loue doth neuer leade a man to doe any thing which God appointeth him to hate, as in this place he doth all rash suretiship.

Verse 16. *A gracious woman maintaineth her honour, as strong men keepe riches.*

A *Gracious woman*) Which is indued with the feare of God, and the heavenly gifts of the holy Ghost, *doth maintaine*, that is doth both get and hold a reuerend estimation and credit, *as strong men* be of ability to obtaine wealth, and riches, and to defend that which they haue.

They which haue grace, shall neuer want honour, how meane *Doct.* and weakē soeuer they be.

Euen women which are of the weaker sexe, euen poore women which neither haue parentage, nor beauty, nor rich apparell to set them forth, are yet reckoned among these honourable personages if they haue vertue: for it is affirmed of euery one, without exception of any. *S. Peter* sheweth that there is no wise nor woman of pure conuersation, whose heart is uncorrupt with a meeke and quiet spirit, but shee is much set by of God, and become *Sarabs* daughter. 1. Pet. 3. 2, 4, 6. And if the Lord so well like of all holy women, he doth as much take pleasure in all holy men: if he bee more delighted with their piety and lowlinesse, then with gold and siluer, with pearles, and pretious stones, and all costly apparel; then he will more esteeme also of the faith and loue, and other graces of these, then of lands, and liuings and titles, and all manner of dignities. If they be transplanted into *Sarabs* kindred, and haue her for their mother: then these are incorporated into *Abrahams* stocke, and haue him for their father.

First, they haue the constant spirit of God constantly resting *Reasons. 1.* vpon them, and that is a *spirit of glory*, as *Saint Peter* testifieth, 1. Peter. 4. 14. As therefore that can neither be kept away, because Gods hand doth bestow it: nor any pluck it away, because Gods hand doth preserue it: no more can any stay them from receiuing praise and commendation, nor wrest it way from them, when they haue it.

Secondly, as the excellency of Christians doth not consist in bodily pompe, but in spirituall graces, and behauiour: so it is not so much apprehended with mens eyes, as with their hearts: their

2. Cor. 4. 2.

consciences wil praise them , when their tongues reuile them , as the Apostle saith : *we approue our selues to euery mans conscience in the sight of God* . He would not appeale to their lippes before men , but to their soules before the Lord , and then he was sure they would iustifie him , though in speech many would condemn him . Now if it be so , a womans grace wil as wel shine to their hearts , as a mans : a poore bodies as wel as rich folkes : so long as they remaine godly , as well as when they began to be godly , and more at the last then at the first , because their light groweth daily greater , and brighter .

3

Thirdly , it is true honour to haue the loue and liking of God and good men for vnfaigned godlinesse and goodnesse : and this belongeth to all the faithfull though neuer so meane and feeble . They will hold fast the feare of God in their hearts , that none can bereaue them of it : they will diligently doe the will of God in their liues , that none can hinder them from it , and then who shall forbid God to shew them the light of his countenance ? and who shall alienate the hearts of Gods people from wishing them wel with kind and hearty affection ?

Vse. 1.

Reprooffe of many sinful women which seeke not honour by vertue , but vanity , not by grace , but garnishes . And that they maintaine with might and maine , with heart and hand , with teeth and tongue , and all the meanes which may be deuised . It is as easie to take a purse of gold from a strong armed souldier , as to perswade them to leaue their pride & idlenesse , and other wicked waies which they vsually walke in .

But besides these , there are other men and women to be reprehended , which are as vnconstant in any good course , as these are obstinate in euil . They haue entred into the way of godlines with good commendation in the beginning , and leaue off the race in the middest , and runne to sinfulness with the world in the latter end . They cowardly suffer themselves to be overcome , and rifled , and robbed of their honour : their crowne is taken from them , their glory is turned into shame and reproach . What causeth them to renounce that goodnes , which before they seemed to imbrace ? to forsake the fellowship of Christians with whom they were wont to conuerse ? to neglect the duties of piety which they

they were wont to exercise? to giue ouer the care of their families which they were wont to instruct? Euen this that they would not be despised and brought to contempt: they would not be mocked and iested at for precisenesse, they would not loose their credit, and good account. But is honour preserved by casting off grace? will this be a meanes to make them glorious, to shake off vertue, and shew themselves vicious? They vtterly deceiue themselves, for our text saith that they must be gracious persons which shall be able to maintaine and keepe their honour.

Consolation for poore maligned and molested Christians, whose weaknesse the power of the wicked seeks to play vpon: and whose meanes the pompous proud worldlings haue in derision, and strue also to make contemptible to all others. The highest sinner in the world is vnable to hurt the lowest Saint, or the most glorious among them, to shame the most feeble among these. It is as possible for a young child by force to wring the weapons out of a giants hand, or take his mony out of his bosome, or to draw his heart bloud out of his body, as it is to strippe any one good man of his reuerent estimation. And what meane they then to surmise that a few of them, and such as be in disgrace with God, and all prudent men can bring downe, and cast to the ground the whole Church of God? Let them know that euery woman of Christ his army, is too hard for any man, for all men, yea and for all the fiends that are in Sathans campe: Euery child may bid defiance to him, and his whole host of persecutors. God is our defence, and therefore they cannot ouerthrow vs: God is our glorie, and accounteth vs for glorious, and therefore they cannot shame vs. In *Isaiah* this is often pressed, *Fear not thou nor, I am with thee, bee not afraid, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, and helpe thee, and will sustaine thee with the right hand of my iustice. Behold, all they that prouoke thee, shall bee ashamed and confounded: and they that strine with thee shall perish. Fear not thou worme Iacob, and yee men of Israel: I will helpe thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the holy one of Israel. Thou wast precious in my sight, and thou wast honourable and I loued thee, &c.* *Isa. 41. 10. 11. 14. and 43. 4.*

1. For men that are truly gracious and yet timorous, and full

of dread, least sathan should take aduantage by their imbecility, and want of courage, and learning to draw them to apostasie, and back-sliding. Consider that he can keepe back none from obtaining honour, whosoever either man or woman doth soundly endeavour to be godly, doth take a sure and infallible way to bee well thought of: none euer failed, or was disappointed of that success. Remember also that when God hath once giuen it, the diuel can neuer take it away from any, but it remaineth to their liues end, and to the worlds end, and world without end: then be well assured that is vnable to depriue vs of grace, and constant faithfulness: for that is the spring from whence the other floweth: that is the body of the light, and the other but the beames which proceed from the brightnesse of it.

Verse 17. *He that is a mercifull man rewardeth his owne soule: but he that is cruell troubleth his owne flesh.*

By a mercifull man, is ment such a one, as with a tender and pitifull heart doth good both to the bodies and soules of men according to their need, and his owne ability. And freely also remitteth wrongs, & passeth by offences without reuengement. Where it is said that *he rewardeth his owne soule*, the sence is, that hee procureth to himselfe both soule and body a reward from God, and that as certaine, as large, and continual, as if the fulnesse of power were in his owne hand, to bestow vpon himselfe as much happinesse for as long time as his heart could possible desire.

But he that is cruell Which either in violence or rigor vseth to offer men hard measure, or shutteth vp his compassion from them that are in affliction, that he will no way relieue or seeke to comfort, troubleth his owne flesh, that is, hurteth his owne body, and in like manner his soule also.

Dott. 1.

Euery mans dealing with others shall rebound to himselfe, whether it be in cruelty, or kindnes. Mercifull men shall receiue mercy from Gods owne hand, and from their brethren, whom he will stirre vp to shew loue and fauour vnto them: and those which are fierce and boisterous to others, shal not faile to be recompenced

ced in time : the Lord will be as seuerer as they are cruell, and as strict in iustice to them, as they are rigorous in extremity to others. And this shall not alwaies be reserued to the last day, or to their death, or to the tormētts in the world to come, but spoilers be many times spoiled in this life, oppressors be oppressed, and tyrants be ouerthrowne by tyranny. And therefore our Sauior giueth an admonitiō, that they which would not be iudged, should not iudge : they which would not bee condemned, should not condemn: they which would be forgiuen, should be ready to forgiue : they which would haue giuen vnto them, should giue vnto others. *For with what measure yee mete, saith he, shall men measure to you againe :* Luk. 6. 37. 38. To spare to speake of such arguments as may be gathered from the estate, & name of mercifull men, and the contrary, because they follow hereafter in this chapter, and we would not forestall our selues, we will hold our selues to the words as they are literally set downe in the text, and make it appeare that euery mans owne soule receiueh most good by the goodnesse which hee exerciseth towards others.

First, it is a forcible meanes for grace to be increased in him, & Gods ordinances to be blessed to him. Hee heareth the word of God delightfully, and it worketh effectually in him. No people were more ready to distribute to the reliefe of their brethren, then the poore Churches of Macedonia, & *Paul* had neuer greater effect and comfort of his ministry then in the Macedonian Churches. So doe they pray with feruency and boldnesse, and good hearts, God heareth them with mercy and fauour, *Dauid* Psalm 86. 2. had encouragement to cal vpon God for the preseruatiō of his soule, whē he could truely plead that he was mercifull. *Cornelius* lost not his labor in praying, but found a comfortable & blessed successe when the Angel could tell him, that his almes came vp together with his praiers in remembrance before God. *Reasons. I.*

Secondly, it maketh way for comfort in feares, temptations, and afflictions: it inuiteth godly men to reparaire vnto vs, it maketh them desirous to refresh our hearts : it strengtheneth their hope in their supplications to God : it ministreth arguments for perswasion to our selues. Or if they should not come at vs, or

hope so wel of vs, or deale so well with vs, yet our owne consciences with the testimony of Gods spirit would support our soules in greatest extremity, as *Iob* did find by happy experience.

It is a treasure that is safely laied vp in heaven for our glory, whereof much will be giuen vs when we shal be dissolued, and goe to Christ, but most of all, when we shal be restored, and Christ come to vs. At his glorious appearance, shall they appeare in glory which haue beene pittifull to his members, and fruitfull in mercy. They shal stand at his right hand, and to them shall he

Iob 31
2
Math. 25, 34.

say, *Come yee blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdoms which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* But all goeth

croffe with carnall persons. The Lord giueth them no grace by his word and other ordinances, but challengeth them for com-

Iai. 1.

Prou. 21, 13

ming into his house with bloody hands. As he hath stopped his eares at the cry of the poore, so he shal cry himselfe and not be heard. Misery will miserably torment him, his house is not a safe place for Christians to resort vnto, Lions dennes seldome fit for Lambes to be in, when good men be present, what can they say to mitigate his feares, or to lessen his sorrowes? If others be si-

Luke 16.

lent, wil his owne conscience speake for him? Nay of all, that and the law of God will be most forward, and forcible to accuse and condemne him. And then at his death he commeth into the case of the rich man spoken of in the Gospel, that was tormented with flames: at the resurrection that sentence shall be pronounced vpon him, which was indited long agoe. *Depart from me yee cursed into euermlasting fire, which is prepared for the diuell and his Angels, Math. 25. 41.* All this, vnlesse he repent, is vndoubtedly belonging to him, besides the continuall perill of stroakes and iudgements to light vpon his body, which euery moment may iustly be feared.

Ese. 1.

Incouragement to goe cheerefully about the works of mercy, since they are so profitable to our selues. Some of them seeme to be very chargeable, and cannot be performed without expences: yet we gaine more then we giue, we receiue more then we lay out, we doe good to other mens bodies, but make the best match for our owne soules. Others seeme very painefull and require both trauel and patience, and many be altogether vnpleasant to

our

our nature: yet our wages doth counteruaile, and ouerpoise all our worke and labour: for we cannot put our bodies to so much toyle and trouble in any seruice of Christian loue, as we shall obtaine to our hearts, delightfull pleasures with rest, and peace, and ioy and gladnesse.

Consolation to them that are fearefull of themselves, and doubtfull of the state of their soules, they feelee not themselves to beleue, they finde not the pearcing of godly sorrow, and therefore they call into question their faith and repentance. But are they mercifull men? Doe they beare a burthen with the afflicted members of Iesus Christ? They dare not say so directly, but their owne hearts tell them that they would mourne more with them, and do more for them if they were able. Their desires then and willingnesse exceed their ability, and what surer note can there be of true mercy?

Rewardeth his owne soule, troubleth his owne flesh, &c.) They are the best husbands which best prouide for the good of their owne persons. To bee carried with carnall selfe-loue is a vice which is worthy to be condemned: to be lead with Christian loue of ones selfe, is a vertue which is much to be commended. The one draweth a man to wickednesse, the other driueth him from it, to goodnesse: the one causeth him to be hurtfull to his neighbours, the other maketh him helpfull vnto them: the one seruing himselfe sinfully, doth vtterly vndoe himselfe, the other applying himselfe to the seruice of God faithfully, doth procure his owne blessednesse for euer. When the Apostle would bring an argument that should be perswasive and forcible, and most likely to preuaile with rich men to worke mercy and liberality in them, he chuseth this, *That they should lay vp for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they might obtaine eternall life.* It were to no purpose to lay vp only for children, for heires, executors, or administrators, though they were sure to haue children, and friends, and their children, and friends were sure to inioy their possessions: but to enrich themselves, is truly to be rich; and to haue ones wealth personally in himselfe, and for himselfe, and not only about him, is to be rich indeed.

Doct. 2.

1. Tim. 6. 19.

First, the current or streame of all the promises, and threatenings, *Reasons. I.*

nings, runneth this way: the reward of all obedience, and the punishment of all iniquity tendeth to this purpose. Blessings vpon goods and cattell, vpon grounds, and fruite trees, vpon children and familie, are but appendances to the substantiall blessings which are conferred vpon soule and body, especially for the eternall state of both. And so when curses fall on the outward things of wicked men, it is, that they may gather waight by the way to presse the heauier vpon their owne persons.

2

Secondly, though one haue neuer so great plenty of earthly things, and abundance of all kinde of prosperity, yet if himselfe be not his own, but destruction, what treasure can do him good? *What doth it profit a man to win the whole world, if he lose his own soule?* Math. 16. 26. So, though one haue neuer so great penury of earthly things, and abundance of all kinde of afflictions, yet if he preserve his quicke stock, that is, himselfe from being a spoile to sinne and Satan, no creature can hurt him, his misery wil droppe off from him, his crosses and sorrowes will vanish away, and come to nothing.

Vse. 1.

Instruction to be diligent in all those meanes whereby we may best benefit our selues, with comodities of greatest valew. As first to labour for true pietie & religion: to be wel acquainted with God, and his holy word: to receiue instruction, to haue it in estimation, to obey it in constant exercise. And hercof the holy Ghost speaketh in the ninth chapter, *If thou bee wise, thou shalt be wise to thy self, and if thou be a scorner, thou alone shalt suffer.* Secondly, that performance of the duties of mercie is a gainefull trade for the soule to thriue by: it bringeth in good store of comforts for present vse, and helpeth men to a stocke of ioye & happinesse for an other day. And therefore our Sauour doth perswade vs to vse it, and giueth vs liberty to make our vse of it. *Sell that yee haue, saith he, and giue almes; make to your selues bags which waxe not old, a treasure that can neuer faile in heauē, where no theefe commeth, neither moth corrupteth:* Luk. 12. 33. It is dangerous, and sinfull to hoord vp much gold, and to keepe it too long: but safe, and commendable to heape vp good works in abundance, and neuer depart with them while the world standeth

they

they shall be sure to take no harme, and we shall be sure to want no good.

Reprooffe of them that are frugall and thrifty, and neate, and husbandly for every thing but for themselves. Their earle is dinged, and tilled, and sowne: their pastures are mounded, banked, and trenched: their trees are pruned, their gardens are weeded, their cattell are carefully looked vnto: and all this while they suffer their hearts to be ouergrown with sinnes, as the wild wast is with weeds and briars: there is no fence to keep the Diuell out of their soules; they grow like nettles & brambles to be cut vp, and cast into the fire. Every one of their horses, every sheepe, every cow, every swine and pig is in better case then themselves. They deale, as if they should trimme their haire, but wound their head: or be heedfull to their nailes, but let their fingers rot off: or keepe their garments whole, but permit their skin to be rent, and torne into peeces.

Verse 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke: but he that soweth righteousness, shall receive a sure reward.*

THe wicked worketh a deceitfull worke) He is continually practising of some euill, which wil neuer faile, to make his expectation to faile. *But he that soweth righteousness*, which constantly, and conscionably is exercised in doing good, *shall haue a sure reward*, partly in this life, with a competent measure of comfortable prosperity, and perfectly in the life to come, with glorious immortality. The sense will be the better discerned, if the opposition be set down in this manner: The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke by sowing of iniquity, and therefore shall be deceived in his reward: but the godly worketh a faithfull worke by sowing of righteousness, and therefore shall receiue a sure reward.

Vngodly men shall be sure to find their sinnes more dangerous and hurtfull then they looked for. Their familiar friend whom they loue so dearly, and make so much of, which is most in their mouthes, in their hearts, and in all their wayes, it will surely shew them a slippery tricke at the last. Saint Paul can say,

D. 7. 1.

as much to this point, as any man, by the experience he had of it, Few had neerer acquaintance with it then he at the beginning, and none had a greater breach with it in the end then he. And then he keepeth no counsell, but telleth all that he found (and God auerreth all that he telleth) *that sinne had deceived him, and slaine him.*

Rom. 7. 11.

Reasons. 1.

First, it putteth them in vaine hope to effect many employes which they can neuer bring to passe, but al their endeouors recoil vpon themselues. How many stones did *Saul* cast vp to brayne *Dauid*? which all lighted on his owne pate. How small a matter did *Haman* thinke it to kill *Mordecai*? yea to destroy all the Iewes? which fell on his owne person, with his family, and other friends. How sure were trayterous Papists, and vndoubtedly assured to blow vp the Parliament, and all estates of the kingdom? and yet of themselues diuers were blown vp to the gallowes, and all the rest, vnlesse they repent, are likely to be blown downe to hell.

2

Secondly, they dreame of a greater felicity and happines in their sinfull courses, than euer they can attaine vnto. When *Abimelech* was aspiring to the kingdome, when he was perswading the Schemites, when he was murdering his brethren, and making them out of the way, what did he once thinke of, but of cap, and knee, of honor, peace, and safety? He had concluded that there would be no molestation and trouble, no breach of couenant and disloyalty, at least no perill of life, especially by the hand of a woman: that all his authority should be brought to such an ebbe, as only to haue power remaining to command his page to runne him through with his sword. The fit and passion of distemper that *Achab* fell into when *Naboth* denyed him his vineyard, declareth euidently how happy a man he made reckoning to be when he should get it. And yet the occurrents which fell out at his taking of possession, ouerturned all his happinesse. He intruded himselfe thereinto with iolity and mirth, but *Eliab* sent him out againe with heauinesse and griefe.

3

They presume of secreesie, that their shamesfull facts shal be hidden, and neuer brought to light, wheras they cannot possibly be concealed, For God himselfe doth see and obserue them, and who

who shall forbid him to reueile and discouer them? *Adam* was away when *Cain* slew his brother, and *Eue* was not there, and *Abel* was made sure enough for complaining, and *Caine* himselfe was silent enough from boasting of it, and no body else was in the fields, either to see *Caine* striking, or to heare *Abel* crying, and yet out it came, and known it is, and euery man can speake of it. *Gehezi* made not all the town of his counsell whē he followed *Naaman* for the mony, he asked not his master leaue to goe after him, nor made report of his dealing, and successe afterwards and yet *Elisha* could tell him, and hath declared to vs, and all others whither he went, and how he sped, and what his intent was in the disposing of his mony, namely, to buy oliues, & vineyards and sheep, and oxen, and men-seruants, and maid-seruants, and to become a great man. What should we speake of the plotting of *Ananiah* and *Sapphira*, & of *Dauids* adultery, and murder, which were so closely contriued as they imagined, that neuer any man should haue had intelligence of them?

Fourthly, they haue taken security for impunity. Either they hope to escape all punishment, or else that it will be so light that they may easily beare it, or so short that they shall quickly passe through it. Whereas the Law of God threatneth the contrary, *That the Lord will make their plagues wonderfull, euen greate plagues, and of long continuance, and sore diseases of long durance.* And if they will appeale from threatnings to promises, from the Law to the Gospel, from *Moses*, to *Christ*, let them heare the sentence that *Christ* passeth vpon such manner of persons: *They shall goe into hell, into the fire that neuer shall be quenched. Where their worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out.*

Deut. 8 59.

Mark. 9 44.

Fifthly, they haue conditioned and indented with sinne, before they entred into the grosse practise of it, that they would leaue it againe after a time, and so by repentance preuent both the shame and punishment. But they know not that all sinfulness is crafty, and cruell: when it hath them, it will hold them, and that fast by the heart, and keep them in perpetuall bondage and thralldome.

They may with as good safety drinke vp strong poyson, and prescribe it a measure how farre it shall worke: or cast themselves

into the raging sea with limitation how deep they will sink, and how long they will make their stay there. All the seruants of sin and satan are chained vp in prison and not at liberty to depart at their owne wils: for the will it selfe is kept in hold, and neuer released, before the Lord with a forcible hand of grace do deliuer it.

Vse. 1.

Instruction, not to suffer our selues to be abused by such a countenancing companion. If a shifter should carry about, a packe of counterfeit wares, it were a point of wisdom to refuse to buie of him, especially if they were infectious, and such as would endanger our houses with the pestilence. Now there is not vnder heauen any Conicatcher that liueth so much by his wit, as sinne and wickednes doth by wiles: which doth not defraud men of their mony, but of their saluation; which bringeth not plaguy stuffe to kill the body only, but most pernicious corruptions to destroy both soule and body for euer.

And sith the works of iniquity be all so deceitfull, let vs hearken to the words of God, and the counsell of godly men, which we shall be sure to find very faithfull. The perswasion of Satan seemed more plausible to *Eue*, than did the commandement of the Lord; but she had escaped the venome and poison of Satans perswasion, if she would haue giuen heed to the Lords commandement.

The note of wilfull vnchaste persons in their misery, will be the song of all other sinners that refuse to receiue admonition: *How haue I hated instruction, and mine hart despised correction: and haue not obeyed the voice of them that taught me, nor inclined mine eare to them that instructed me: Within a little space I am in all euill in the midst of the congregation and assembly.*

Prov. 5. 12-13.

2

Reproofoe of them that vndertake the defence of subtil sinne: that offer themselues to be compurgatours for her; if she say that she is honest and vpriight, they will sweare, they thinke it true. What euill is there of Idolatry, superstition, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, cruelty, wantonnes, yea abominable whoredom, pride and riot, but it shall haue proctors to pleade for it, & giue countenance to it? And most commonly they are the men, that of all others euery way for soule and body, for substance and credit, haue

haue been most plagued by her. Her craftines hath so enchanted them, that by her vsage she hath gottē their harts for euer. Their wits, their tongues, their pennes, their practise of life, & all shall be altogether for her against God & his word, against all godly men, against all ciuill men, against their owne estimation and state, comfort and saluation.

God is a sure paymaster to all that labor faithfully in his seruice. Though their strength be not great, nor their worke very much, yet if their desires be sound, and their endeouours vpright, their recompence will also be certaine. The Prophet *Azariah* knew that he spake as well to posterity as to those of his owne age, and as truly to Gods people as to King *Asia* and his people: *Be strong, and let not your hands be faint: for your worke shall haue a reward.*

Dott. 2.

First, the couenant is plaine and without al doubtfulness, there is no equiuocation in it, there is no mentall reseruatiō to peruert the meaning of it.

2. Chro. 15. 17

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, the couenant maker is absolutely perfect, and euery way all sufficient. His wisdom foreseeth what things are fit to promise: his truth doth bind him to do all that is promised: his mercy doth moue him to do more then he promiseth: and his power doth serue him to performe whatsoeuer his wisdom seeth meet, his truth hath vndertaken, or his mercy willett vnto his seruants.

2

Instigation to shew all diligence in doing good, and let no time slip away without some fruitful exercise. Of men some hire their workfolks by the year, some by the halfe year, some by the moneth, some by the week, & some by the day: but God giueth vs wages for euery minutes work, for euery moments work, for euery gracious speech, for euery holy thought, for employment in our beds, for patience in our sicknes, for good vsage of recreations: there is no season, no state, nor place, wherein a good man may not be wel occupied, for the increase of his wages. The same reason doth *S. Paul* vse to incite the Corinthians, and all other godly Christians, to be very laborious and painefull in all good seruices continually, seeing there wil be a resurrection, and a retribution to euery man according to their waies. *Therefore my*

Vse. 1.

beloned.

1. Cor. 15. 58.

beloued brethren (saith he) be ye stedfast and vnmoueable, abundant alway in the worke of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vaine in the Lord.

2

Incouragement to patience, though we seem not to haue present pay for our obedience. Our wages is in a sure hand, and will not faile to be yeelded vnto vs when our need requireth it, or any vse may be made of it, for our best aduantage. Our wages is better than ordinary; the whole crop that we sow is giuen vs for our labour, and therefore let vs not bee too hasty to reape it before it be ready. Good Farmers indeed, pay the ploughmen sooner then the corne is ripe, but cheaper then the corne is worth: whereas God bestoweth freely vpon his laborers all that they haue sown, it is their own, and therefore let them tarry till harvest, and they shall find their hire will farre surmount their trauels. This is the ground of the Apostles perswasion to the Galatians: *Let vs not be weary of well doing: for in due season we shall reape if we faint not.*

Gal. 6. 9.

Ver. 19. So righteousnesse leadeth to life, and he that followeth euill seeketh his owne death.

THIS verse is inferred vpon the former, by way of explicatio, to shew what hee ment by the deceiueable worke of the wicked, and the sure wages of the righteous. And first he beginneth with the latter according to the manner of the Hebrewes, declaring that life, vnderstanding thereby immortality and all the blessednes annexed vnto it, is that sure reward which al godly men may vndoubtedly expect: and destruction both of soule and body eternally, is the end whereunto the deceitful work will bring wicked men, which do so much deceiue themselues by a greedy desire of satisfying their sinfull lusts.

Doct. 1.

The Lord hath not only appointed a certaine reward, but a precious for his seruants. Nothing can beter be the such a happy life and such a happy life as he deemeth nothing too good for them to enjoy. Hereof the Apostle speaketh to the Romans: *The wages of sinne is death, but the gift of God is everlasting life through Iesus Christ.* Rom. 6. 23.

This

This is to set forth the bounty and superabundant munificence of God the father, that the riches of his loue & goodnes may be magnified aboue all creatures. He putteth into the hearts and power of sinfull men, to giue gold and siluer, to giue iewels and treasure, to giue lands and liuings, to giue titles and dignities, to giue crownes and kingdoms: but neither men nor Angels could euer giue life to any, or keep their owne by their owne power: the liuing Lord, and eternall God, is he that maketh al his Saints as well in heauen, as in earth to liue eternally.

Secondly the Lord Iesus our Sauior hath by his dying killed death, and bought life, and by his resurrection triumphed ouer death; and won life for euery one of his members: yea he himself is the life of his people which belecue in him, who maketh them partakers, by an euerlasting communion with him, of his owne life. He laid it downe for them: and took it vp againe for them, and imparts it vnto them: it is as possible for him to perish, as them, and the whole Deity as him.

Thirdly the seed of grace whereby the sonnes of God are regenerate as an immortall seed, as *S. Peter* calleth it, and of the nature of the father that begetteth them, and therefore they must needs receiue life, and retaine life, and neuer after be depriued of it.

Fourthly, without this life the children of God were in no better case then other creatures. For either they should be subiect to eternal death, which is the condition of the wicked reprobats or else be extinct and abolished with a finall dissolution, which is the state of vnreasonable beasts.

Instruction to labor for righteousness, and pretiously to account of it, since it procureth so precious areward to vs, and that from the fauor and kindnesse of our gracious God. Hee that striueth earnestly herein may truly be said to worke for life. For life is proposed, and life he seeketh, and life he shall find. If great wages were vncertain, or certain wages were but small, it would be but a smal incouragemēt to take great paines; but seeing now it is so sure, and so large, & so good, what is too much to be performed, and what is too grieuous to bee indured for the same?

True it is that righteousness will call for trauell, and raise vp trouble

Rom. 18.

2. Cor. 4. 17.

trouble, but it is as true that al the trauels & afflictions of this present life, are not worthy of the glory, which shall be shewed vnto vs. For our light affliction which is but for a moment causeth vnto vs a farre most excellent, and an eternall weight of glory.

Gen. 19. 16.

If nothing but bare life were bestowed vpon vs, euen meere deliuerance from the danger of death, it were a benefit not lightly to be esteemed. It was said of Lot, that he was preserved from destruction of Sodome, the Lord being mercifull vnto him; and yet his goods, money, and cattell which he had in great abundance, were all destroyed. And the diuell spake the truth though in craft and malice, concerning Iob: skinnie for skinnie, and all that euer a man hath will he giue for his life. But when life is full of liuely comforts, when it is adorned with endles glory, when it is enriched with infinite treasures, what crosses, what pouerty, what temptations, what reproaches, what persecutions, and sufferings should diminish our desire of it, or make vs remisse in seeking for it?

2

Reproofof them that care not whose seruice they com into nor what worke they doe, so that they may haue nothing to do with God and his seruices. They think no prison more streight, then the Church: no drudgery more grieuous then prayer, and hearing of sermons, singing of Psalmes; and sanctifying of the Sabbath: no bondage so burdenous as restraint from sinfull delights, and fleshly pleasures: no misery so bitter as sound Christianity. They distaste with great detestation, all persons, and actions, and gestures, and words that saour of godlinesse, or haue any stampe and print of piety in them: and as themselves abhorre all his worshippe, so they labour to discourage all others from doing him any seruice. These are they which are continually censuring of professours, and deriding their precisenenes, and insulting ouer their pouerty and meane estate. As though the Lord were not able to maintain them that serue him, or else did grudge to bestow good things vpon them: as though he were a niggardly hard master, vnwilling to allow his people sufficiency of food and wages. That were a great disloyalty so to traduce a liberall Lord and free hearted Prince, who is ready to promote his seruants: to liuing, though it bee but for a

time

time: but it is an execrable impiety so to blaspheme the most bountifull God, who giueth to euery one of his, both liuing and life, and all blessednes for euermore. But many of them say, that they speake by experience, themselues haue been professors, and as forward as the best, and they neuer got any good by it. And such *Malachy* bringeth in quarrelling against God: *Your words*, saith he, *haue been stout against me, yet yee say, what haue we spoken against thee? Ye haue said it is in vaine to serue God: and what profit is it that we haue kept his commandement, and walked humbly before the Lord of hosts?* Mal. 3. 13. 14. Who is so busie to complaine for want of wages, as they which neuer performed any good worke? let not the exceptions of murmuring apostataes preuaile in the eares or hartes of any that haue vnderstanding. They were neuer of the family of GOD, though they crept into his house: they neuer did one good chare in obedience: and for what then should they haue their recompence? They were alwaies proud hypocrits though they boast of humility, and why should they be vsed as humble persons? But be it that they plead for others who haue faithfully kept the comandements of God, and truly been humbled in his sight, and yet labour in a low estate and meane condition. Is there no profit in seruing of the Lord, vnles there be present preferment and earthly promotion? Our principall pay will be in life, whereof we haue part in hand by grace in our soules in this world, and the rest is behind vntill the pay day in the world to com. So that a sinner cannot discern of the happinesse of a Christian, nor conceiue how God dealeth with him. For the comfort of the heart is a thing vnknowne to him, and the glorious life is hid with Christ in God, and shall not fully be seen before we appeare with him in glory.

Col. 3. 3. 4.

But he that followeth) The more violent wicked men are in their sinnes, the more neer they draw to destruction. When they course euill as the grayhound doth the Hare, and hunt for it, as the hungry lion, or other wild beast doth after his prey (for thece is the similitude taken) then they will ouertake their death anon, and come speedily to damnation. As the misery of the Aegyptians approached neere vnto them, so their cruelty increased towards the Israelites. And they were neuer more fiercely disposed

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to kill and to slay, than when the waters were presently to doe execution vpon them. Warre was concluded without any great consultation; a mighty hoast was gathered, without any busines of mustering; they were all in readines to fight, without any further training. So stood the case with the Sodomits, they were all set on mischief & madnes immediatly before they were destroyed. And so it fared with *Achab*, who tooke his farewell toward his voyage and death, with contempt of the word of God, and persecution of his Prophet. And so we might note *Belsazzar*, and *Haman*, and many others for this purpose, whom the Lord cut of in the very practise of some notable mischief.

Reasons. 1.

Ephes. 4. 19

First, this earnest pursuit of sinne, with loue and liking of sin, proceedeth from an hart hardned with custome of sinning, being past remorse and feeling, and this will bring men to worke all kind of wickednesse euen with greedinesse. And this is a forerunner of Gods iudgements.

2

Ierem. 8. 12.

Secondly, this following of euill is also accompanied with impudency, and shamelesnesse: as their hearts cannot feare before God, so their faces cannot blush before men. And what state these men stand in, the Prophet *Jeremy* sheweth: *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay they were not ashamed, neither could they haue any shame: therefore shall they fall among the flame: when I shall visit them they shall be cast down saith the Lord.*

3

1st Cor. 1.

Rom. 7. 21.

Thirdly, this manner of sinning crieth in the eares of the Lord as it is faide of the Sodomites, and prouoketh him to anger, and therefore will draw downe a speedy punishment vpon them.

Instruction, if we loue our selues, our life & saluation, that we fly from euill, and follow it not: for it will follow vs too fast. We shall goe no whither whiles we carry this sinfull flesh about vs, but it will be at our heeles, yea in our hands, and heads, & harts, and whole soule and body. Euen the best may say as *Paul* did, *I find that when I would doe good, euill is present with me.*

But much more is it present when we are not so wel disposed though indeed it be not then so easily desiered: and therefore since it will intrude it selfe vpon vs against our willes, let not vs play

play the parts of the wicked, to take satans place and become tempters of our selues.

Terror for the workers of iniquity, which bestow great pains to do themselves great hurt, which wil not be stopped from the seruice of sinne, and therefore cannot be staied from the punishment thereof. What do they else but fall into frantick passion of desperate persons, which seek al opportunities to murder them selues? They make euery delight and pleasure a cord to strangle themselves with: euery lust a knife to cut their own throates: euery commodity a well to leape into: their meate and drinke to be a poyson to their soules, & hurtfull to their bodies by sursetting and drunkennes, and such like abuses.

Verse 20. *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord: but they that are vpright in their way, are his delight.*

By *froward in heart*, he meaneth not only such as are inclined to anger and bitternesse, which are of a crabbed, sowre, and churlish disposition; but all that are wilfull in any sinfull course, though with neuer so great mirth and laughter. Yea many times excessiue pleasure, and sporting, and merriment, with good fellowship, as men account it, is the very subiect of their frowardnes, & that which they so obstinately stand in. And though they pretend reason for their doing, and seem sinoothly to defend it, without peruerfenes, yet the hart being settled in resolution of it owne purpose, the Lord taketh notice of it, and therefore abhorreth them for the present, and will make his iudgements to manifest his detestation of them hereafter. *But they that are vpright in their way and heart*, (as the other are froward in heart and behauior) are greatly beloued of God now, & shall more fully see, and feele, and enjoy the comfort and happinesse of his fauor in time to come.

Whosoever is giuen to frowardnes, is wholly void of vprightnes. A sincere hearted Christian may through infirmity, fall into a fit of frowardnes for a time, as *Asa* did, when he cast the Prophet into prison, for reproouing his sinne: but to haue the habite of it to be froward, is opposed as contrary to being vpright. So

were the qualities one set against another in the third verse of this chapter: *The vprightnes of the iust shall guide them: but the frowardnes of the transgressors shall destroy them.* So are the persōs contrarily dealt with as contraries by the testimony of Dauid: *With the vpright man thou wilt shew thy selfe vpright: with the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure; and with the froward thou wilt set thy selfe to wrestle.* Psal. 18. 25. 26.

Reasons. 1. First, the vpright man hath a respect to all the Commaundements of God, with desire and endeouour to keep them, as *Dauid* professeth of himselfe. *All his lawes were before me, and I did not cast away his commandements from me. So was I vpright with him, and haue kept me from my wickednesse.* Psal. 18. 22. 23. Whereas the froward person doth either reiect the whole law of God, or else retaineth, yea maintaineth at least some one sinne wittingly, because he may know, and willingly, because he refuseth to obey, against some one commandement.

2 Secondly, they which are vpright, doe ground their actions and waies vpon arguments and reasons, and therefore they strue to haue them as plaine and sound as may be: and they which are froward, doe ground their reasons and arguments vpon their waies and actions, & therefore they labor to haue them as crafty and subtile as may be.

3 Thirdly, they which are vpright will desire to haue the truth reueiled to them, and yeeld to it when it appeareth, & loue them the better that shall informe them in it. And they which are froward will desire to haue the truth suppressed, & contend against it though it be manifest, and like them the worse that shall shew it vnto them.

Vse. Instruction, not to giue too much credit to froward men, nor too large a testimony of them. If we see that they will not bee brought to a Christian conuersatio without, we may know also that they haue an vnchristian conscience within: for their hart is neuer better then they are willing their waies should be. And why then should we esteem them to be men of plaine meaning, when God himselfe telleth vs, that there is no plaine meaning in them? Why should we praise them whom he doth discommend? why should we cleare them whom he conuinceth? why should we iustifie

iustifie them whom he condemneth? And yet it is a fault, though much against piety, that carrieth a great colour and glosse of loue and charity. He is a very honest man (say they) but yet giuen to gaming too much, no man can dissuade him from it. It is his only fault (saith another) that he is a great swearer, and cannot be brought to leaue it. He is a right good man (saith a third) and euery way deserueth praise, sauing that he is no body at Church: he cannot abide those sermons, and Preachers: say all what they can, he is still at defiance with them all, and so they, as much as in them is, stand for them that go about to trauerse their inditement against the Lord and all his faithfull Ministers.

The loue of God is not according to that which men haue of outward things, but to that which they are in hart and behauior. Many froward men are greatly in the world, & yet are al gently abhorred of him: and most vpright men are of the meaner sort, & yet nothing the lesse in his fauor. And this is *Dauids* meaning when he saith, *The Lord will try the righteous, but the wicked and him that loueth iniquity doth his soule hate.* The righteous are his gold, and therefore he will refine them vntill they be perfectly purged from al drosse: yet he loueth them as well in the fornice as in the treasury: but as for the vngodly, howsoeuer he seem to spare them, yet he doth not like them: & though the might of his hand be not yet vpon them, yet the hatred of his heart is strongly against them. Doct. 2.

The righteous stand before him in the merits and glorious righteousness of Iesus Christ: he is his welbeloued sonne, and in him he is well pleased with all his members: and the froward and wicked stand in their own impure and filthy nature, harts, words and actions. Reasons. 1.
Math. 3. 17.

Secondly, the righteous are his own obedient sonnes that doe faithfully serue him: and the froward are his rebellious enemies that fight continually against him. 2

Thirdly, he cannot look on the righteous, but he must behold the gracious work of his owne hands in their new birth and second creation: but in the froward he seeth the work of the diuel, whereby they are depraued and made most vile & ouglesome. 3

Instruction, that wee conforme our selues to the example of *Vse. 1.*

God in this behalfe: if froward persons be abomination to him, let them not be in estimation with vs: if he loth them, as we doe snakes, and toads, & all kind of serpents, let vs not loue them as delectable things, wherein men reioyce & take pleasure: but let vile men be vile in our eyes, and let such as feare the Lord be regarded of vs. Far be it from vs that we should grace and countenance those whom God doth proclaime to be odious & abominable: that we should associate our selues and be found companions with those whose sight is offensive vnto him, that we should receiue them into our seruice, which refuse to enter into Gods: & God reiecteth them as altogether vnfit for his family. But wel is it with our soules, whē we can truly say with the Prophet. *Al my delight is in the Saints, and in them which are excellent. Mine eyes shall be to the faithfull in the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfit way, he shall see me.*

Pſalm. 16. 3.

Pſalm. 101. 6.

2

Terror for those obstinate wicked persons which trust that by stiffe standing to their racklings, they shall grow into credit and good account with the world, as indeed their successe is very oftē answerable to their expectation. But what gaine they by getting mans fauour and Gods displeasure? when basenes and folly did smile vpon them for a moment, and glory and wisdom doe frowne on them for euer? It was the case of the Scribes and Pharises, they iustifie themselves before men, all did praise them; but though they were so highly esteemed among men, yet they were abomination in the sight of God: our Saviour told them so in their prime and full blossome, but they little thought it to be true. But what is become of all their saluations and titles, & praises now? hath not the Lord sent a blast vpon them and caused their glory to wither away? is not all their excellency turned into contempt, and their names made a by-word of reproach in all Churches.

Luke. 16. 15.

3

Consolation to vpright hearted men, how poore soeuer they be, & how basely soeuer the world thinketh of them, it is enough for the that the Lord taketh pleasure in them. Whē *Abashueros* had but once graced *Mordecai*, al the city quickly took notice of it, & he was presently great, notwithstanding he was a captiue & a condemned man, & of a nation that was euery where despised and

and was there more force in the fauor of a mortall man to make him honorable whom he bare no great affection vnto, than there is in the loue of God being so tender and large to his own children? what then though they should be dealt with, as *S. Iames* speaketh, that in respect of gold rings and goodly apparel, which rich men present haue on, they should be put vnder the footstool or thrust out at doores? yet let them know that God hath chosen them to be rich in faith, & heires of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that loue him. What though they should not only be despised, but maligned of them that be stronger than themselves? yet let them not be discouraged at their power that are against them, but comforted in his good prouidence that is for them. If this be true, that they be Gods delight, then this wil be also as true, that God will be their defence. *Abah* was an heauy friend to *Micaiah*, and professed his hatred towards him, and threatned mischief to him: and yet Gods fauour preuailed more for his safety, than *Abahs* displeasure could doe for his hurt.

1am. 2. 3. 5.

2. Chro. 19.

Verse 21. *Though hand ioyne in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished, but the seed of the righteous shall escape.*

THough vngodly men haue many friends, & such as be mighty: though they ioyne all their forces together to aide and defend one another, or all of them one, yet they shall not be able to minister any helpe or succour when the Lord taketh them in hand to plague them. On the other side, though righteous men seem to be in great perill, and haue fewer friends, and those also poore and feeble, yet they shall go out and be deliuered, and not only so, but their children and posterity also shall be preserved: so that whereas many strong wicked men cannot deliuer one, one weake godly man shall deliuer many.

Vngodly men are nothing the better for all the friends they haue: their plotting together and combination is of no force at all for their preservation, but rather for their ruine. The Lord by the Prophet *Isaiah* doth deridingly challenge, and after a sort dare the enemies of the Church to attempt any thing against his people

Doct. 2.

people vpon their perill: *Gather together on heapes: O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces: gird your selues, and ye shall bee broken in pieces: take counsell together, yet it shall be brought to nought: pronounce a decree: yet it shall not stand.* As if he should haue said: make your selues as strong as ye can, with multitude, leagues, armour, consultations, authority, and by what meanes ye can, and as oft as ye will; yet all shall do your selues no good, and nothing shall doe my seruants harme. When the Canaanites and other inhabitants of that land were to bee punished, how many Kings with their people banded themselues togither against *Ioshua* and the Israelites? and yet it was to no purpose: they did but offer themselues to the sword: that stood *Ioshua* in good stead; for it would haue been long before he could haue found them out, and slaine them single man by man.

Reasons. 1.

First, this associacion and confederacy doth not breake off Gods resolution, either by pacifying his anger, or daunting his courage: it rather incenseth him to greater displeasure, because they will stand at defiance with him, and offer to make head against him. And that more encourageth him (as we may speake to the capacity of mē) to take the oportunitie of their insolency, and puissant assistance, because their ouerthrow will be so much the more for his glory.

2

Secondly, it is impossible for them, be they neuer so many, to diminish his power and make him the weaker. When al Sodome and the other cities by it were vngodly and wicked, he could as easily destroy them with fire and brimstone, as though they had been but a few. When the whole world was giuen ouer to sinfulness and rebellion, he could as easily destroy it with raine & water as if it had been but one man.

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Thirdly they cannot thereby increase their owne power, to make themselues able to encounter with him, and so to auoide his strokes by resistance: for strength and might consists not in the multitude of men, but is limited by Gods hand, who onely hath the bestowing of it, because it is his owne; and to whomsoever he giueth it, from the same he can at his pleasure take it, when it is abused by them. Were it not so, the diuell and all his host about him would trie what they could doe, before they would

would be cast into that miserable and desperate torment at the last day. There was neuer so great an army, as that will be of reprobate men and angels, and if any thing would make them to strue, it would be the damnable estate whereunto they shall be adidged then presently to enter: but they shall sensibly see and feele it to be bootlesse, and therfore they will neuer attempt any such matter.

Instruction to vse better meanes to be freed from punishment *Vse. 1.* and that is to take heed before how we fall into sinne. So did *Iob* provide for his impunity, by preserving his eyes, his heart, and *Iob. 31.* his hands from lust and lewdnes, from violence & cruelty, from Idolatry and couetousnesse, and all such misbehaviour, as might prouoke Gods wrath against him. And if that be past, we haue done such things already: runne not from God to friends for to saue vs: let vs not seek the helpe of their hands, vnlesse it be to be lifted vp with ours in prayer, but runne to God by faith and holy humiliation. No other course wil secure vs from iudgemēts deferred; neither the multitude of friends, nor the meanes they can make, nor their tender affection towards vs, will preuaile to succour vs, if we fall into the hands of the liuing God. *Haman* in al mens iudgement was surely backt, & so were *Baals* Prophets, and yet committing sins of death, they receiued the sentence of death, and felt the execution of death in the presence of those whom they most depended vpon. *1. Kings 18. 40.*

Admonition to beware how we take vpon vs the defense of sinfull men to keep them from such correction as is due to them; for we loose our labour if we seek to stay them from all punishment: many by escaping the parents rodde doe come vnder the Magistrates whip, and many by escaping the whip, doe come to the gallows, and many by escaping the gallows do fal into damnation: for they are depriued of those medicines which might haue wrought a cure in their soules. And what doe we in this case but withstand the discipline of God himselfe? How would the Magistrate rake it if the offenders who he is to punish should be pluckt away and rescued out of his hands? do not they which make such attempts bring themselues into the compasse of the same faults which the malefactors were to suffer for? what soeuer

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the others were condemned for, these haue now made themselves accessary vnto, whether it be felony or treason, or any other grieuous offence: and yet it is a thing little feared of men: they which haue neither mercy nor courage to deale in the cause of a poore oppressed innocent are ready and bold to protect and maintaine those, which are impious and sinfull, and walke in such lewde and wicked waies as are offensive and abominable to God and man. How many are kept from their condigne punishment by the countenance of great mens cloath and seruice? How many doe words and letters preuaile for? how many are cleered by corrupt Iurors, who lay the guiltines of many foule and fearefull faults vpon their owne consciences?

Dost. 2.

But the seed of the righteous, &c. The best way for any man to doe his children good, is to be godly himselfe. He that setteth himselfe to serue God, & to seek euerlasting saluation, is busily occupied in prouiding for his posterity: & that which his soule shall find to be most comfortable to him, his seed shall find to be most profitable to them. The same spirit of truth which here doth as-

Prou. 30. 7.

He that walketh in his uprightness is iust, and blessed shall his children be after him. He needeth not to say

Psal. 112. 1. 2.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commandments: his seed shall be mighty vpon the earth: the generation of the righteous shall be blessed.

Reasons. 1.

First he himselfe is become the sonne of GOD, and so his are Gods sonnes children, and then consider the abundant loue euen of earthly parents to the seede of their sonnes and daughters: *Manasse* and *Ephraim* were as deere to *Iacob*, as if he had been their immediate parent, & so were *Ephraims* and *Manasses* children to *Ioseph*: though *Naomi* was but mother in law to *Ruth*, yet how acceptable was *Obed* the sonne of *Ruth* vnto her? though *Moses* was but the adopted Sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter,

Gen. 48.

though

though of another nation, though of such a nation whom they held as bondseruants, though of a people that was an abomination to him and his people, though such a people as he feared and sought to destroy; yet *Pharaoh* loued him and preferred him, and shewed all kindnes to him for his daughters sake, when she had taken him to be hers.

Secondly, a Christian parent is most fit and competent to deale with his children to be seruiceable to God: and to deale with God to be merciful to his children: great is the force of a fatherly admonition, when a godly Father admonisheth: and marueilous is the efficacy of a parentlike blessing, when a holy parent doth blesse the fruit of his body. So much doth *Jacob* intimate *Gen. 49. 16.* to *Ioseph* for his exceeding great comfort: *The blessings of thy father shall be mighty with the blessings of my elders: vnto the end of the hills of the world, they shall be on the head of Ioseph.* That prophane *Esau*, as wicked as he was, did assure himselfe that he should be the better for his father *Isaacs* blessing, if he could obtaine it, and therefore wept for sorrow when he went without it.

Thirdly, the children of religious and faithfull parents are intituled to the promises and blessings of GOD both for soule and body, as appeareth in the holy records, by that argument *S. Peter* perswaded them to beleue, whose hearts were pricked at his doctrine: *To you is the promise made (saith he) and to your children, and to all that are a farre off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* *Acts. 2. 39.* And by the like reason the seruants of the Lord who giue themselves to piety and mercy, are comforted notwithstanding their great afflictions, and the flourishing state of the wicked: *The righteous isouer mercifull and tender, and his seed enioyeth the blessing.* *Psalm 37. 26.*

A reproofe of their folly and foule impiety, that are so farre deuoted vnto their children, & carried with such a desire of their aduancement, that they cast off all deuotion towards God, and neglect the good care of their owne saluation. They feare not to cast themselves deepe into hell, so that they may rayse vp their name and their houses high vpon earth. And for this cause they giue ouer themselves to miserable niggardlines and pinching, to burdenous vexations and trauels, to shamefull iniustice and falsehood.

hood, to violent oppression and cruelty. They haue a good pen-
niworth, as they think, and buy very cheap, when they can gaine
worldly wealth by losse of their heauenly happinesse: when they
can purchase liuings to their posterity, by passing away the life
of their soules. But hearken a little ye silly wretched creatures: O
foolish men when will you begin to learne wise dome? your thi-
uing is wastfulness; your rising is falling; in purchasing you for-
feit: in semblance of loue you practise hatred: in seeking to set
vp your seed by such vnlawfull courses, you take the way to
pluck them down, & vterly to vndo them for euer. No man but
Ieroboam could euer haue wrought so much mischief to *Ieroboams*
family: and *Abab* and *Iezabel* were most mortall enemies of their
race and linage: and *Nebuchadnezzar* prouided woe and misery
to his issue that was yet vnborne when he died. And by what
meanes did all these persons bring al this hurt vpon their seed? by
relinquishing religion and the true seruice of God: by exercising
tyranny against the seruants of God, & greedy getting of goods
to make themselves and their children great: that which in tan-
ting manner is charged vpon one of them, is every way verified
vpon euery one of them. *Ho, he that conuerteth an euill counsel into
to his house, that he may set his nest on his, so escape from the power
of euill. Thou hast consulted shame to thine owne house, by destroying
many people, and hast sinned against thine owne soule.*

Hab. 2. 10.

2

Consolation to religious parents, whether they be ritch or
poore: whether their children be dead or liuing, whether the li-
uing be godly or sinfull: If they haue wealth, they may hope it
shall be for the vse of their sonnes or daughters: if not, that the
al-sufficient God will provide for them sufficiently without their
helpe or substance. If they be dead, they haue great encourage-
ment to comfort themselves in the perswasion of their saluation.
If they liue, though we should die and depart hence, yea and
leauethem in afflictions and distresses, yet this comfort we haue,
that as the mercy of GOD to our selues was not assured vnto vs
for tearme of life, but eternally for euermore: no more is his
goodnes to ours to cease with our life, or be determined at our
death. Poore lame *Mephiboseth* had a Father liuing, yea an e-
uerliuing father that appointed him to be well provided for, and

maintai-

maintained, when good *Ionathan* that begot him was slaine and gone. The godly poore Prophet that left his wife so far in debt, that neither she was able to satisfie it, nor the creditor willing to be satisfied, without taking of her sonnes to be his bondmen; yet had taken order before his death for the paiment of debt, for liberty of sons, for maintenance of family, namely by possessing the constant fauour of God, which both conueyed him to heauen, & remained with his houldhouse here in earth. If they should be wicked yet the Lord hath grace enough and power enough to make them good. It is without trouble or charge to himselfe, or hurt to his creatures, and why should they not then both earnestly pray for it, & constantly wait for it? what if it be not wrought at first? yet it may be effected at the last: and so long as they have a naturall life, so long may their friends hope for their euermore life. *Jacobs* sons were not all godly the first yeere, nor in many yeeres, and yet not without goodnes in their latter yeeres. And so stood the case with *Manasseh* the sonne of *Ezekiah*, and many other holy Christians.

2. King 4.

To godly children of religious parents, who besides the state they haue in the promises of God in regard of their owne faithfulnessesse haue also a portion therein by right of their progenitors, and so they haue a double portion, and may warrantably take double comfort, if withall they can yeeld to God his double praises.

3.

It was a strong and mighty prayer that *Jacob* made and full of assurance of hearing, and happy successe, when he remembered that the Lord was the God of his father *Abraham*, & the God of his father *Isaac*, and had promised to do him good, and formerly performed it, and would yet be more mercifull to him & his seed after him: it is not a trifle or matter of small consequence to be able truly to plead before God ones own faith & integrity, and the piety or godlines of their father or mother, or others of their ancestors.

Gen. 32. 9. 10.

12.

Verse 22. *As a iewel of gold in a swines snout: so is a fayr woman that lacketh discretion.*

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AS a ring of gold, or any other ornament, do not adorne, but misbecome a swine, no more doth beauty, stature, strength, wit, apparell, wealth or any other external thing, bring true praise or commendation either to man or woman which wanteth true wisdom or vnderstanding.

Doct. I.

Swines snout, &c. God maketh no more reckoning of sinfull people without vnderstanding, then of bruit beasts without reason. Though they haue humane nature, and carry the forme and shape of men & womē, with best shew, yet if there be nothing in them but that which is humane, euen flesh and bloud and sinfulness, no beauty, nor brauery, no personall excellency or artificiall additaments, make the best of them, is more acceptable to him, than is the basest of al the other creatures. It is a very homly comparison wherwith the holy Ghost disgraceth wicked men in this book, and yet so true, that he auoucheth it againe in the new testament: *The dog is returned to his owne vomit, and the sow that was washed, to the mallowing in the mire.* *Prou. 26. 11. 2. Pet. 2. 22.* And as in these places for impurity they are likened to filthy beasts: so in others, for hurtfulness they are resembled to fierce and venomous beasts, as Leopards, Lions, Wolues, Beares, Dragons, Aspes, Adders, Vipers, and Cockatrices.

Ira. 11. 6.

Reasons. I.

First, all those creatures, for their parts, haue euer since the beginning of the world stood and continued in the state wherein they were first made, & that deprivation which is in the nature of any of them, proceeded not from themselves, but from the fall of man, which hath not only deformed himself, but distemppered euery thing about him: and the cause why they haue not knowledge and vnderstanding, is, that they are not capable of it: but wicked men are wholly degenerated from their originall excellency, and haue defaced the image of God in their owne soules. They haue lost their iustice and fallen to vnrighteousness: they are deprived of holines, and become prophane: all sound vnderstanding

standing is gone, and nothing is in them but ignorance of Gods holy will, and of the mystery of saluation. And therefore *Jeremy* saith, that euery man is a beast by his owne knowledge. And *Zophar* in the book of *Iob* proceedeth further, and sheweth what kind of beast he is most like, *Vaine men*, saith he, *would bee wise though man borne* (that is in his owne estate not regenerate) *is like a wild asse colt.* Jeremi. 1.
Iob. 11. 12.

Secondly, euery dumbe creature according to his kinde, performeth the will of God without any resistance. Whereas wicked men rebelliously doe striue against their maker, and contemptuously transgresse his commandements. 2

Thirdly, the vile estate and miserable condition of gracelesse men, how great soeuer, doth make it appeare that the Lord preferreth them not before contemptible beasts, because at the least their end will be as bad as the worst of theirs. And this doth God himselfe declare in the Psalmes; *Like sheep they lie in the graue,* 3 *death denoueth them.* Man is in honor, and vnderstandeth not: he is like to beasts that perish. They lie in their graues as the carcases of rotten sheep in a ditch, and death maketh a pray both of their soules and bodies, as crows and kites, and rauen, and dogs doe feede vpon carrions. Psal. 49. 14. 15.

Instruction not to satisfie our selues in this, that hauing speech, and reason, we go beyond all fishes, birds, beasts, and all creeping things, vnlesse also by graue and spirituall gifts, we go beyond all vnregenerate men. Vsc. 1.

To acknowledge with thankfulness the great fauor & goodness of God towards vs, when he hath transformed vs into the shape of Christians, and the image of his owne son; that we may be acceptable to him. 2

Neither beauty, nor other outward gifts, doe any good to the owners that are destitute of wisdom. All ornaments can neuer make a foole to be comely, no more then a silken coat can make an Ape to be manly, or a sweet bath can make a blacke Moore beautiful. If wisdom be wanting, we may truly say with *Salomon* *Vanity of Vanities; and all is vanity.* Doct. 2.
Eccle. 1. 2.

First, the person of the man commendeth all outward things and only grace and wisdom make his person commendable. Reasons 1.
And

Eccle. 8. 1.

Prou. 31.

2

3

Prou. 16. 9.

4

And in this sense it is said in the book of Ecclesiastes, *that it is the wisdom of a man that doth make his face to shine.* Nothing but sound vnderstanding and holy behauiour can possibly make either man or woman to be estimable, and worthy to be looked on. It is as truly to be affirmed of one sexe as another, and no lesse of one state than of another, *that fauor is deceit, and beauty is vanity: but a woman that feareth the Lord (she shall be praised).*

Secondly, through want of wisdom, the good gifts of God be defaced (as the swine would not spare to bring the Jewell with her into a filthy puddle, or to wallow with it in the most loathsome mire) and so they are the lesse esteemed in better men, which are worthily adorned with them.

Thirdly, in this case they peruert them vsually to the hurt of others: as beauty is made a snare to entangle mens eyes and affections: wealth and power bee weapons of oppression: wit and policy be nets for fraude and deceit; fine speech and elocution be calls to allure men to the hurt of their soules and estate. And the same is verified of many things which *Salomon* speaketh of one: *As a thorne standing vp in the hand of drunkards: so is a spurr in the mouth of fooles.* A drunken companion with a thorne, or goade in his hand, doth sometimes prick and pierce himselfe, and sometimes hurt them that be neere about him: and so standeth the case with sinners that can speake wittily, and yet want a sober heart to guide their tongues christianly: they wound their owne soules, and depraue good causes, and set a colour vpon sinne, and much traduce the names of many blamelesse persons.

Fourthly, themselues of all others are in most peril, and like to receiue the greatest hurt by these meanes. Pride hath a doore set open to it for free access to the hart, where there is any externall excellency without internall sanctity: And Shame hath a way prepared for it to follow after, when they haue great things for many mens eyes to looke vpon, and little discretion to vse and manage them. Nothing is more behouefull for a foole than to be obscure in the darke, that his folly shame him not in the light. How much better had it been for *Abshalom*, *Achitophel*, *Adonijah*, *Ieroboam*, and *Achab*, with others of like state and behauiour,

hauour, if they had been deformed in body, and weak in capacity, and meane in condition, than to haue been so conspicuous, and of such great note, and now to be so contemptible, & of such great infamy?

Instruction, that since wisdom and grace do giue honor, and life, and good effect to all the inferior gifts of God, which are but temporary, and not euermlasting, that therefore before all the rest we should most labour for wisdom and grace. If other things be already bestowed vpon vs, seeke to obtayne and increase these heavenly ornaments, to giue a lustre to the natural gifts wherewith the Lord hath qualified vs, & to season our outward possessions to our vse and comfort. *Wisdom* saith Salomon, *is good with an inheritance, and excellent to them which see the Sunne*. His meaning is not that wisdom is good to them only that haue inheritances, but that it is good, yea necessary for them which haue inheritances to get wisdom that will make their possessions good, and that wil help them to the good vse of their possessions. And so wisdom is good with strength, wisdom is good with wit, wisdom is good with gentry, wisdom is good with dignity, and wisdom is good with beauty. It doubleth the greatnes and value of euery good blessing that God bestoweth. *Dauids* victories and power be renowned by wisdom. *Salomons* glorious kingdom is made memorable by wisdom: and so is the prosperity of *Iob*, and *Abraham*: and so is the aduancement of *Ioseph* and *Daniel*; and so is the beauty of *Hester*, and *Sara*.

Reproofof them that be afrayde of nothing so much as of grace and heavenly wisdom, because it will crosse their pride and sensual lusts. It will forbid the nice dames that make idols of their owne bodies to bestow so much time in tricking vp themselves, with pranking and painting: and therefore they haue no more desire to receiue godlinesse, than to depart with beauty. They are as willing that the small pockes should deforme their faire faces, as the word of God should informe and cleanse their soule consciences.

Verse 23. *The desire of the righteous is only good, but the hope of the wicked is indignation.*

WE must beware here that we iustifie not al the wishes and desires to be good, which righteous men conceiue, nor condemne all to be vnrighteous which conceiue any wishes and desires that be not good: for then should *Dauid* be excluded out of the number of the righteous, or else his desire of hauing *Bathsheba*, or wishing to know the number of the people should be allowed. But he vnderstandeth the maine streame of their desires, the course and current of their hearts is to godlinesse and goodnesse, though sometimes they corrupt nature in themselves, and the tempestuous temptations of Satan doe violently driue their thoughts another way; which is wholly contrary in the wicked. For they desire nothing but mischief and euill, and therefore in the end they shall receiue nothing but misery and punishment, which will be so great and so grieuous, as will make them raue and rage with madnes and fury, especially because they looked for a better state. Thus then standeth the opposition: the desire of the righteous is only good, and therefore their hope shall end in consolation: but the desire of the wicked is only euill, and therefore their hope shall end in indignation.

Doct.

Godly men are most desirous to please God, and God doth as graciously accept of their desires in the best manner. They are not willing to allow a thought in themselves, that should not be lawfull, and he is not willing to looke vpon, or speake of their vnlawfull thoughts. Though diuers things be many times amisse in their minds, and in their mouthes, and in their deeds, yet there is faithfulness, and therefore he passeth by their faults. So he testifieth of *Dauid*, that he kept his commandments, and followed him with all his heart, and did only that which was right in his eyes.

1. Kings 14. 8.

And so he testifieth of all the godly Israelites in the booke of Numbers: *He seeth none iniquity in Iacob, nor any transgression in Israel.* And so he testifieth of all vpright hearted people whom-
focuer

Numb. 23. 22.

soeuer in the Psalmes. Surely they worke none iniquity, but walke in his waies. Psalm. 119. 3.

First, he imputeth that to euery man, and counteth it his which proceedeth from the predominant power in him. In the regenerate nothing is theirs but their fruit, and nothing is their fruite, but the worke of the spirit. And so though the vnregenerate doe many good things, yet nothing is theirs but the fruit, and nothing is their fruit, but that which groweth from the flesh.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, he seeth the force and violence of originall corruption, how it assaulteth them, how it woundeth them, how it taketh them captiues against their willes, and therefore rather pitieth them, than accusereth them. And hence it is that *S. Paul* by good warrant, for example to all other good Christians, doth once and againe disclaime all that euill from being his, which he was vn-willingly drawne vnto. *If I do that which I would not: I consent to the law which is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. 7. 16. 20.

Thirdly, he knoweth that they will pursue their own sinful actions, and thoughts with hue and crie: and if any desire breake out from them that is not good, they will send out many others after it, for humiliation, and pardou, and purging of their hearts. And therefore since themselves be so ready to complaine to him he will be sparing of complaints against them.

Consolation to the poore innocent seruants of God who yet are defamed with all kind of false accusations. They are called hypocrites, heretickes, rebels, traytors, and all that naught is. *David* was so charged by *Saul* & his courtiers: *Paul* was so charged by the malicious Iewes: the godly Iewes so charged by *Haman*: *Christ* himselfe was so charged by the Priests, Scribes, and Pharises: all good men must looke to be so charged by all sorts of sinners. Well it is for them that their hearta can witnesse that their desires are only good, and better that the Lord seeth it, and best of all that they haue such a God as will openly publish it. If he knew as much by vs as the wicked say against vs, or wold refuse to testifie that he knoweth for vs, as euery one of vs were more righteous, so should he be of all others most ignominious. For no creature that euer God made (the diucl not excepted) is so

Vse. 1.

much spoken against; as good men are, neither any so bad a name as they, if the violent tongues of malicious persons may make a good mans name to be bad. If sentence shold passe vpon the godly at the last day, according to the verdict of them that are not friends or parties, we should be all cast, and condemned, not one man would be acquitted. But here is an helpe against all these surmises of purposes within, and accusations of behauiour without: let appeale be made to him that beholdeth all, and hee will cleare the righteous from all these imputations. This brought Job to speake so confidently of his cause: *Ob that I had some to heare me: behold my signe that the Almighty will wraies for mee: though mine aduersarie should write a booke against me.* This brought Dauid with such affiance to repose himselfe vpon God: *Iudge me Lord according to my righteousnessse, and according to the innocency that is in me.* And this brought Isaiah to vse such liberty and boldnes in challenging his quarrellous enemies. *He is neere that insisteth me: who will contend with me? Let vs stand together: who is mine aduersarie? Let him come neere to me. Behold the Lord will helpe me: who is he that can condemne me?* And yet this is not all the comfort that a iust man hath, though it be great, but is increased by the testimony which God giueth of their desires, that seeing they are good, they shall easily be granted, and seeing he taketh notice of no more then of those which are good, their other infirmities shall be no impediment. And therefore if they aske euertlasting life, why should they make question whether they shall haue it? If they seek spirituall graces at his hands, what should hinder the finding of them? If they craue the good blessings for themselves and theirs, for greater experience of his fauour in things of this life, what should stay them from comming? When his iustice pronounceth their desires to be good, will not his goodnes be ready to fulfill them, especially his truth hauing promised the performance thereof?

Psalm. 145. 19.

2

Terror for vngodly men which haue many siofull desires in their hearts against Gods glory, and seruices, and people. Their soules wish nothing seriously, but that which God hateth; and godly men feare and pray against. Liberty for lewdnesse they desire as life, & those that like not of wicked waies they abhorre

as much as death. Nothing pleaseth them so well as to heare of the finnes or sorrowes of professors, and nothing grieveth them so much as to here that wicked persons are either reclaimed from their dissolute behaiour, or punished for their shamefull offences. Surely these men are not righteous, their desires are not good, and therefore whatsoeuer is in them, or commeth from them is euill, and displeasing to God, and dangerous, & damnable to their owne soules. As touching the other clause, for the euent of wicked mens hopes, see the second doctrin of the tenth chapter, and the first doctrine of the eighteenth verse of this chapter.

Verse 24. There is that scattereth, and is more increased: but he that spareth more then right, commeth surely to pouerty.

They that disperse their goods, this way and that, bestowing them vpon such as are in want and necessity, or otherwise employing them for the publike benefit of many, they that are ready and willing to part with their goods or mony, for the reliefe of such as are in want or necessity, or to any other good vses are said to scatter them: and such take the best course to increase them, as sowing of corne is a meanes to helpe a man more and more.

And this he deliuereth with great wisdom and warines, saying, that some are more increased & not all: for many scatter vpon dice, and cardes, and dogges, and whores, and such like, & they may look to be stript of all the rest, rather than to adde to that which they haue. On the other side he that keepeth in that which he ought to lay out, and spareth that which duty requirerh him to spend, doth play the euil husband for the impouerishing of his owne estate.

True liberality and mercy is not an hurt, but a furtherance to mens estates. Neuer any man was made the poorer by one penny for giuing of many, in due manner, but diuers haue been the richer. The same rule holdeth in this case, as in all other the good gifts of God, that the good vsage of them doth vsually bring an augmentation of them. So it is to be found in learning and know-

Doct. 1.

ledge, and in what good thing it is not so to be found? we neede not traueil farre for prooofe of our point in hand, but onley step ouer to the next verse following, and there we shall haue a confirmation of the same. There we shall see that they which feede others shall be fat themselues (for so is the sense) and they which are as good springs to send out streames, shall haue such supply, as that they shal not be dried vp, but be as well able to flow at the euening, as they were in the morning, and to morrow as much as to day, and the next yeare no lesse than in this.

Reasons I.

Prou. 3. 9. 10.

2. Chro. 9. 10.

First, they haue the promise of blessing from God which imploy their substance to the glory of God, and the benefit of his poore seruants which are in want. *Honor the Lord*, saith hee, *with thy riches, and the chiefe of all thine increase: So shall thy barnes bee filled with abundance, and thy presses shall burst with new wine.* And the Apostle *S. Paul* giueth as large an encouragement to the Corinthians in the new Testament. *Hee that ministrETH seede to the sower, will minister likewise bread for food, and multiply your seed, & increase the fruits of your beneuolence.* No field is more fertile to sow in, then the poor members of Iesus Christ: no seed is better then mercy, and Christian liberality, no weather or watering is more seasonable then Gods blessing: no crop of corne is so commodious and profitable as is the reward which God giueth both to soule and body.

2

Mercifull men procure praises to God to be plentifully offered, and praiers for themselues for all good happinesse: & therefore how can they but thrue and prosper? That reason doth *Paul* presse in many words to the Corinthians, that they might know that their liberality was not in vaine. He wil increase the fruits of your beneuolence, that in euery sort yee may be made rich to all liberality, which causeth through vs, thanksgiuing to God. *2. Cor. 9. 11.* He dwellerh vpon the argument, and vtgeth it in euery verse to the end of the chapter.

3

Thirdly, the mercy of God towards other of his people which are in need, doth often cause mercifull men the more to abound in riches. Since their desire is to be helpers of their afflicted brethren, their power shall serue to performe it: and since they haue begun it so well already, they shall be able to doe it better hereafter,

after. And for this cause they are promised *all sufficiency* in all things, that they may abound in every good worke. As it is written, *He hath spered abroad and given to the poore : his beneuolence remaineth for ever.* 2. Cor. 9. 8. 9. He sheweth by the testimony of the Psalme, that their communicating to the poore did not bring them to poverty, that they should be compelled to giue pgiuing, but did establish their state, that they might continue their beneuolence as long as they liued : for so much doth *ener* seem to import in this place.

Instruction, to strue against infidelity which hindreth mens hearts from the cheerfulness of mercy, and staieth their hands from many good contributions, and keepeth them wholly from the exercise of liberality. They lose by this, *vs. 1.* the opportunity of much gaine, they debarre themselves from that plenty which they might enioy. They will not receiue so much good as God will afford them, because their harts will not afford them leaue to beleeue, that there is so good a reward provided for them that afford reliefe to poore Christians. The holy Ghost in the booke of Ecclesiastes assureth *vs* that nothing is lost that is bestowed in goodnes. He willeth men *to cast their bread vpon the waters and after many daies they shall find it againe.* Eccles. 11. 12. It is a kind of proverbiall speech with *vs*, for fruitlesse charges, to say, I might as well haue thrown my mony down the riuer. But in this case though we seem to throw our mony, or foode, into the riuer, or sea it selfe, we shall haue it restored with aduantage, yea, and when we thinke all is forgotten. And therefore he proceedeth to incourage men that they should lay about them, and not spare, in the exercise of liberality. *Give* (saith he) *to seuen, and also to eight.* Bestow vpon many, and when thou hast done that, make not an end, but giue to more than thou didst before. As if hee should haue said, bestow as much seed as thou hast land to lay it on; and get as much land as thou hast seed to sow it with. But infidelity can hold no longer in hearing this, but our commeth her worthy question : How shall I liue my selfe hereafter, if I giue away all now? who knoweth what hard times be comming? Now he stoppeth her mouth with retortion of her owne reason. No man knoweth what euill daies may come, and therefore wisdome

dom would that we should make prouision for our selues before hand. And nothing is surer laid vp, than that which is charitably layd out; that will serue for a deere yeere, and a rainy day, as we are wont to speake in our prouerb.

- 2 Reproofe of the folly of miserable niggards, who being greedy of getting more, know not how to vse that which they haue, and therefore take the way to consume all. The one halfe of our Text is a threatning against them, and all the reasons which did confirme the good estate of liberall persons, do as much conclud the hard case of pinching neere misers, by the contrary. They put their Talent to no good vse, and therefore may daily looke to haue it taken away from them. They intitle themselves to the threatnings and curses of the law, and therefore cannot auoid the iudgements, whereof the stroke of pouerty and needines is one among others. Sighes & complaints go vp to God against them, but few praiers, and no thanksgining at all for them. Their beneuolence and goodnes, doth not stand the poore Saints in such stead, as that the Lord for their sakes should commit any part of his substance to their hands, or leaue that with them, which they haue singred already.

Verse 25. *The liberall soule shall waxe fat, and hee that giveth plentifully shall poure forth.*

These words haue affinity with the former part of the verse next before, and are ioyned to it partly in way of explication, and partly in way of illustration. And therefore first he sheweth who obtaine that blessing to increase by scattering, & that is they whose liberality beginneth at their hearts: and then he declareth the prosperous successe thereof by a similitude from well-springs which receiue as much water inwardly, as they send forth outwardly, which, if they should faile of issue, would also faile of fulnes, the waters diuerting their course some other way, where they might haue better passage, or else infusing themselves in the earth, and mould of the adiacent places round about, and so make a quagmire. The same comparifon doth *Isaiah* vse for the same purpose: *The Lord shall satisfie thy soule continually in droughe,*
and

and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters faile not.

He that expecteth comfort for sound mercy, must not onlie *Doct.* apply his hand, but his soule to the exercise of well doing. That in the seate of loue, which giueth life to all good actions, and without which in regard of themselves, it is as good neuer a whit, as neuer the better. For though a man should feed the *1. Cor. 13. 5.* poore with all his goods, and haue not loue, it profiteth him nothing. *Esai.* conditioneth with them who would haue the Lord to poure forth his mercies and blessings vpon them, that they should not only poure out their foode and victuals, but their soules also to the hungry. *Isa. 58. 10.*

First, there is required a needfull worke of the soule in this *Reasons 1.* seruice, and that is wisdom and discretion. So is a mercifull man commended in the Psalmes: *A good man is mercifull and lendeth, and will measure his affaires by iudgement.* And so is a liberall man descryed by the Prophet *Esai.*, *That he will deuise of liberall things.* He wil meditate where his gifts may best be placed: what is fittest to be giuen: how much is meet for him to contribute: in what maner he should performe it. *Psal. 112. 5. Isai. 32. 8.*

Secondly, compassion must be ioyned with it, that the helper, and the party holpen, may mutually communicate their cases each with other: he that is in prosperitie bearing a part of his brothers burthen, and he that is in aduersitie receiuing a portion of his neighbours blessings. This could *Iob* trulie testifie of himselfe, that he vsed to weepe for them that were in trouble, and his soule was in heavinesse for the poore. *Iob. 30. 15.*

Thirdlie, it must be seasoned with cheerefulnesse, that it may be more comfortable to man that shall receiue it, and likewise more acceptable to God that will reward it. Hereof doth the Apostle admonish the Corinthians to an especiall regard, saying: *As euery man wisheth in his heart so let him giue, not grudginglie, nor of necessity, for God loueth a cheerefull giuer.* *2. Cor. 9. 7.*

Reproo' of them whose soules haue neuer any dealing in doing of good, vnlesse it be to peruert all with Pharisaicall hypocrisie and vaine glorie. They giue hand ouer head to tagge and ragge, without difference of anie, except they shut out the best, *Vse. 1.*

and bestow on the worst, frowning on them that are the most honest, & feeding of them that of all others are the most unworthy. They contribute to good vses with no lesse difficulty, then if a distresse of a fine or amercement were to be extorted from them. Commiseration & pity are meer strangers vnto them, their hearts haue no acquaintance at all with them.

2

Consolation to poore men, that they are not excluded from the grace & blessednes of being mercifull, though they attain not to the estate & abilitie of being wealthie. Mercy is not placed with money in the purse, but dwelleth with loue and kindnesse in the heart. He that can mourne with such as doe mourne, he that can pray for them that be in distresse, he that can any way seek to comfort the afflicted, may truly be said to haue a soule of blessing, & is of God himselfe esteemed mercifull. The successe which mercifull men shall finde for their owne estate, hath been already declared in the former verse, and therefore in this may be passed ouer.

Verse. 26. He that withdraweth corne, the people will curse him: but blessing shall be vpon the head of him that selleth corne.

IT is not vnlawfull to keep in corn, as *Ioseph* did in the time of plenty to be provided against scarcity and dearth: but when we may spare it, & others need it, then to withhold the selling thereof in hope to raise the price, this tendeth to a common hurt, & therfore will cause a common complaint of the people against vs. But on the other side, blessing shall be on his head that selleth corne, he shall not only haue the good testimony & praiers of men beneath, but the blessing of God himselfe from aboue descend vpon him. Provided that his heart be vpriight therein, not so much respecting the price in selfe-loue, as the profiting of his brother in Christian charity: and that he vie all other due circumstances accordingly. As to sell that which is good at a reasonable rate, & perform it in due season, and full measure and such like.

DoA. 1.

They are after a sort publique enemies of the country, that procure or seek for a dearth. The Lord would haue vs to collect

lect and deeme what harme they do by the effects that ensue therupon. The exclamation and outcrie, not of one person, or familie, but of the multitude of the people, doth intend in this case some griuance among them. Scarcity of food is one of the most griuous iudgements, wherwith the Lord is wot to plague a natiō, & how can we then take them for our friends, which wish so griuous a punishment? *Salomō* by praier made a way for the praiers both of the whole people, & the particular friends & members therof, to come to God for remouall of such a misery; then what are they to be accounted that send forth desirs, & put forth endeauors to call for it, and bring it?

1. Reg. 8. 3.

First they are heauy aduersaries of the poore, and practise to adde sorrow to them that are already in sorrow. The greatest weight of this burthen is like to light vpon their backs, because they are lest provided of armour to keepe it off. An example therof is to be seen in the prophecie of *Amos*, where the selfe-same effect is wrought by the selfe same meanes which we are now in hand with: *Hear this, O ye that swallow vp the poore, that ye may make the needy of the lād to fail, saying, When will the new Moone be gone that we may sell corne, & the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, & make the Ephra small, and the shekell great, and falsifie the weights by deceit? & buy the poore for siluer, & the needie for shooes; yea & sell the refuse of the wheat.* They had long kept vp the corne for this purpose to haue it grow deare, and now the time serued the turne, and it must be opened in all the halt, they thought the daies of the Lords own seruice too long, vntill they were at it. And now wo to the poore, for the plot is laid to prey vpon them. They shall buy the refuse deare, which is little worth, and sell themselues cheape to pay for it.

Amos. 8. 4 & 6

Secondly, they are pernicious to men of all sorts & conditions, vnlesse it be a few of those few which haue corne to sell. And to this point let them speake which can speake by experience, & experience hath taught, not long sithence, the greater number of housekeepers, as the higher the prices of corne doe rise, the lower the states of families fall. And the sellers of vic-
tuals do the more fill their purses with mony, the lesse the poor seruants fill their bellies with meat. Aske the traueller, by the

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way, aske the labourer in the country: aske the tradesmen in the towne; aske the common sort, yea almost any sort of inhabitants in the citie, & which of all these will say, or truly may say, it is no burthen to vs that things are no cheaper? A great part of their care is to make prouision for household, a great part of their labour is swallowed vp in prouision: a great part of time is too little for their labour. So that their care is more, their labour greater, their commons shorter, and state much weaker. Many be restrained from doing further good: many be compelled to lessen former familie: manie thereby be brought to manifold inconueniences, more then we expresse or thinke of.

Vse. 1.

Reproofe of all that affect such a mischief, liuing in hope, for their own priuate lucre, that so great an hurt will grow to the publike state of the land: but specially of such as take the way, and vse the meanes to effect this euil, & to draw vpon it such a iudgement. And of this sort are they which practise that which is here declared to be a noysome sin, namelie to store vp their corne that no man shal haue any benefit by it, whiles there is any good substance in it. They are much more kinde hearted to Rats, Mice, and Wesils, then they are to their brethren: for they shall haue all freeleie giuen them for nothing, and men cannot buy any of it for their mony. And therefore what can they say for themselues why they should not be as much liable to the wo & curse which *S. Iames* doth denounce, as those whose other riches were corrupt: whose garments were moth-eaten for want of wearing: whose gold & siluer was canckred and rustie for want of vsage? But worse are they which not only hoord vp their own corne, that it shall neuer come forth seasonably to preuent a dearth: but ingrosse other mens also for the same purpose, that they may make their gaine thereof to the detriment and hurt of many others. But of al others, worst are they which not only keep back corn from the market, but from the barn: not from sale, but from sowing: which refuse to yeeld tillage & seed to the ground: which yet further, by force, or fraud, extort the ground from other men that they shall neither till nor sow it. These dry vp the springs of the Market, that the streames of plenty should be restrained from flowing to it: these bring a curse

curse vpon the earth, and make it barren in comparison of the store it was wont to yeelde. These labour for depopulation of houses and townes, and fields, and people. [Isai. 5. 9. 10.]

Consolation to them that bring an vpright heart to selling, though they cannot be so large in giuing: therein they do a seruice to God; therein they performe a worke of loue to their neighbours: and therefore they shall be better satisfied at Gods hand then at the buyers: and his pay will be better in grace and goodnesse, then the other can be in gold and siluer. 2

The people will curse him, &c. It is a grieuous plague to be pursued iustlic with the cries and clamours of the people. True it is that *Jeremie* and others of the most faithfull seruants of God haue been spoken euill of, and cursed by the multitude. And so it is true that *as the sparrow by flying, and the swallow by flying escape, so the curse that is causlesse shall not come.* And it is most true, they whom men reuile and persecute, and say all maner of euill for Christ his sake falselic, are blessed. But this is also verie true, that to be spoken against for sins sake, trulie, is not a matter of blessednesse but miserie: the wings of a mans name and reputation will be clipt so short that it shall not auoid the stroke and shot of a curse, if it be dulie caused. In this same manner are hurtfull men threatned, which flatter, or countenance, or beare out wicked persons in their sinfull courses. *He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse and the multitude shall abhor him.* Doct. 2.
[Jer. 15. 10.
Pro. 26. 2.] PRO. 24. 24.

First, if a good name be a thing most desireable, and a treasure to be preferred before gold and siluer, and other precious commodities, then it must needs be that an euill name, and infamie is a thing very loathsome, and worse then the losse of anie earthlie thing, yea then verie needines and beggerie. Reasons. 1.

Secondly, they which by their owne desert haue stirred vp complaints against themselues, are not onlie smitten with the breath of inans mouth, but with the stroke of Gods hand. Hee purposeth it in his counsell: he threatneth it in his word; he effecteth it in his prouidence; he hearkneth thereunto, in pitie to them that be oppressed: and in anger, against them that are oppressors. Neither is this the case of violent men alone and such 2

as heare euill for hard dealing, but of al sorts of sinners which blemish themselues with any kind of misbehauour.

Vs. 1.

Reprehensio of impudent persons which haue hardened their faces, that they cannot blush, or be ashamed nor desist fro their shamefull misdemeaners, howsoeuer they are thought of, or spoken against. If they be exhorted to any good duty which carrieth no credit among such as are carnall, or diswaded from any euill custome which carrieth no disgrace among the that are sinful, their present answer is, What will me say? But let the hear that their pride, or vnthriftines, or couetousnes, or vncōfiancy, or faithlesnes in couenāts, &c. is much censured, many take great exceptiōs against them, they shift their hāds & goe quite on the other side: Say al what they will, I care not for it: better men then I haue bin spokē against, Christ himselve had scarce a good word of the most. But the questiō is not how good men haue bin dealt with, but how they deserued to be dealt with. True it is & we cōfesse it, that many refused to speak good words of Christ: but did Christ euer prouoke the to it, by euill deeds to the? But words (say they) are wind, & reports a wōder for nine daies. But their crimes, say we, are more then wind, & their guiltines wil not be blown away in nine thousand yeeres. That which men speake truly against them, God will charge more fully vpon them at the last day: & his words will be as fire, & his sentence will not vanish away at all, but continue to their shame and torment for euer.

Verse. 27. He that diligently seeketh good, shall get fauour: but he that seeketh euill, it shall come to him.

Doct.

HE that seeketh carefully with an vpriight heart to benefit those among whom he liueth in any good manner, taketh the best way to win the hearts of the people, and is like to haue the hearts of good men knit vnto him, and certaine to obtaine and inioy Gods fauour and louing kindnesse. And he that plotteeth, or practiseth mischiefe against others, of all others shall be most hurt thereby himselve.

He that would be well thought of, must not only wish well but indeuor to do good to his brethrē. To bear good affectiō

to mākind, but especially to Gods Church & people is a thing pleasing to God, & godly men; but men see not the affectiō to be good, further thē it is manifested by effects: & GOD seeth that affectiō not to be good, which is void of a working vigor & fruitfulness. By what steps did *Nehemia* ascend to that estimation which is had of him, in the Church, in the Scriptures & in Gods own presence now in heauen? He inquired of the state of his brethren, he mourned for them, he fasted for them, he praied to God for them, he spake to the king for them, he undertooke a iourney for them, he was indaungered, he was reproached, he was traduced & all for their sakes. And therefore it was an effectuell petition which he offered to GOD:

Remember me O my God in goodnes, according to all that I haue done for this people. Nehem 7. 19.

How came *Onesiphorus* to be so deere to *Paul*, & so much beloued of God himself, who hath registred his name in an euerlasting record, euen in his own holy scriptures? by shewing him selfe kind, & bold, & bountifull to the Apostle. He did not only desire that *Paul* might do well, but took the pains to com to Rome, & there also visited him in the prisō, & so prouided, that by his means, he might do the better. 2. Tim. 1. 16.

First it is the nature of loue, to expresse it self by testimonies of beneficence & goodnes. For it is not a loue in truth if it be not in deed, as well as in word and tongue. Reasons. 1. 1. Ioh. 3. 18.

Secondly, there is no sinceritie where is no exercise of well doing, & therefore it will do no more good to our selues to thinke, or say we desire well to them whom we set our selues no way to do good vnto, then it doth to an hungry persō to bid him eat, & giue him no meat, or to one that is cold, to wish him warmth, and minister to him neither fire nor cloathing. Reproof of thē that take a contrary course to get loue & good liking. As for Gods fauor they either count it to be so little worth, as they regard it not at al, but thinke the lest wel doing too great a price for it; or els to be so commō & ordinary, as that it wil be found without seeking: or els such an excellēcy to be in themselves, as that God cānot but take delight in them howsoeuer he be disposed towards others. And for mēs affectiōs & good opinion, they hope to come by them by easier means:

Verse.

meanes : and that is by making themselves popular in practise of some plausible sinnes, in yeelding liberty for all licentious courses to them that liue vnder them, in procuring impunitie to disordred persons. So that whereas God in his word here saith, he that seeketh good shall get fauour, they in their deeds say, he shall get fauour that exerciseth euill.

For the other part of this verse, looke the seuateenth verse.

Verse 28. He that trusteth in his riches, shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

HE that so reposes vpon his wealth, as that for loue, and desire thereof, he is willing, and in confidence thereof he is bold to sin against God; he which hopeth it will keep him from troubles, or rid him out of troubles, or any way conferre happinesse to him, this man shall surely be brought downe, and fall into mischief. And so by the same proportion, shal al those which trust to men, or to wit, or to any other creature. On the other side, iust men are all on the mending hand; they are well planted, they grow in a fruitfull ground by the riuers of water, they haue the Lord Iesus Christ for their root, they haue GOD the Father to dresse and keepe them, and therefore they shall flourish as a branch which groweth and hath green leaues. The drought of aduersitie shall not hurt them, the dewes of wholesome prosperity shall not faile them. They shall haue safetie for their bodies, graces for their soules, competency for their state, and all good furtherances for their euerlasting glorie. Thus standeth the opposition. The wicked trust in their riches, and they shall fall like rotten boughes; but the righteous trust in the Lord, and they shall grow like flourishing branches.

Doct.

Though the stayes of many wicked men seem to be the stronger, yet the states of all godlie men prooue to be surer.

If safetie consisted in wealth, and happinesse in height, we could not but yeeld that diuers sinfull persons were grounded in great safetie & happinesse: for they haue the world at wil and are moued vp to eminent places. And if perill did alwaies accompany

pany pouerty, and misery likewise a meané condition, who could deny, but that the most of the best men, should euer be found in the worst case, and of all others the most miserable? for that they are commonly poore and base in the world? But if God in his iust iudgements doe lift vp his enemies hie, to cast them downe the lower; and if his seruants take rooting low, that they may grow vp the hier, then let the wicked take heed of a downfall, and then let the righteous not doubt of a rising. The thirty seuen and seuenthy third Psalmes, are treatises wholly vpon this argument, besides many other texts of Scripture. And this cometh to passe to both sides. First, in regard of the different, and contrary choise which they haue made of helpers to themselves. *Reasons I.* What doe sinfull persons and wicked men take to be theyr staues to leane vpon, and that with theyr whole weight? Euen fleshly supports, as goods and riches, which are slender reedes, that will breake, and run into their hands and shoulders, and lay them flat on the ground. These they build vpon as a foundation most firme and stable, these they depend vpon as friends most sure and faithfull: these they trust vnto as holds most strong and mighty. And yet is there any thing more vncertaine, more deceitfull, more weake and feeble then these are? They be fugitiue and away they go, when they should sticke to a man: they be false and performe nothing that they promise. They say, giue vs your heart, especially when we increase, we haue power to doe you all good. But *Dauid* saith, *If riches increase, set not your heart thereon, God spake once, twice haue I heard it, that power belongeth only to God.* There was neuer any papist, or hethē man more deceiued in dumb Idols, then worldlings be in the hope of their mony and substance. The Images haue as much sense to heare, and speake, and deale for them which pray to them, as gold and siluer and other treasures haue ability in themselves to helpe them, that make them their gods: and many more are illuded by these, then by the others. And whom doe the godly make their refuge? In whom is their hope fixed? in God omnipotent, eternal, endles in mercy, wisdom, and truth, whose good providence doth neuer faile them in life: whose gracious fauour doth not forsake them at death: And that one word may comprehend all, and that

Psal. 62. 10, 11

that is infinitely much, and more then heauen & earth can comprehend, he is God euery way for them, al-sufficient.

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Secondly, in regard of their behavior towards the Lord. The wicked commit an execrable sacriledge & spirituall treason, they cast off that loyalty that is due only to him, & yeeld it to the abiect and contemptible creatures: for so may they be called when they are matched as equals, or preferred as superiours to their Creator. And this is done in all vaine confidence, as it was spoken of trust to flesh & blood, so to all of that kind: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.* Confidence is a prerogative and royalty, that the Lord neuer communiceth to any, vpon any conditions. He so calleth for loue to himselfe, that men also should be loued for his sake, and feared and reioyced at, and the like is in other affections: but to trust in any besides him, is as much as in vs is, to set the imperiall diadem of heauen and earth vpon their heads. Now the godly relying altogether vpon his fidelity and power, yeeld him homage, and declare themselues to be his loyall, faithfull, and obedient subiects, and perform a most acceptable seruice vnto him.

Jerem. 17.5.

Pse. I.

Instruction, to be so much more industrious for righteousness, than riches, by how much it is better to be a liuing tree, than a dead stocke: and to stand fast in the state of all good happinesse, than to fall into sinne, and shame, and misery, and destruction. So much goodnes as any man hath, so much he hath of faith, so far he sheweth the sappe and vertue of his roote: so certaine and assured he may be of perpetuall firmnesse and stability. And looke what measure of vaine confidence is in euery one, so much sinfulness is in him (and therefore the contrariety is set between such as trust in their riches, and the righteous; because he that hath affiance in his wealth, must needs be euil, and he that is righteous must needs trust in God) and so sure it is that Gods strokes and iudgements will pursue him, and to his owne inhability of standing, he shall haue this added, that God will push at him, and cast him downe.

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Terror for couetous Idolaters, which make their goods their Gods, and their greedy getting, their deuotion, and their plenty
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their safety, and their pastures, fields, barnes, shops, warehouses or coffers, their heauen. Like foolish men, *they waite vpon lying vanities, and forsake their own mercy.* It is as easie for a cropp of corne to thriue vpon a wast heath, or in the middest of a thorny hedge, or thicker of bushes, as it is for grace to grow in their hearts and it is as easie for a cable rope to goe through an needles eie, as for them to enter into the kingdome of heauen. And yet they thinke all to be well, and their state to be happy: yea they presume so farre of their own standing, that vpon confidence of their power they doubt not but to giue others the fall: they hope that their withered rotten sticks shall be able to root vp and throw downe the strongest Cedars that grow in the Church of God. Such a one was *Doeg*, that thought to doe great things against *Dauid*, but *Dauid* did after a sort defie him, and bad him do his worst, yea he derided, and told him that the worst would be his owne: *Why boastest thou* (saith he) *in thy wickednesse, O man of power? the louing kindnesse of God endureth daily. God shall destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee and plucke thee out of thy tabernacle, and root thee out of the land of the liuing. The righteous also shall see it, and feare and shall laugh at him, saying, Behold the man that tooke not God for his strength, but trusted to the multitude of his riches. But I shall be like a greene Olive tree in the house of God: for I trusted in the mercy of God for ever and ever.*

Jonah 1.8.

Mar. 10. 24. 25

Psal. 52. 1. 5. 6.
&c.

Consolation to godly men, that haue receiued to their owne hearts, and giuen to other men, a testimony of faith and righteousness: no enemy without, or corrections within, shall deprive them of their comfort, or of any good blessing that concerneth this present life, or their euermlasting saluation.

Vers. 29. *He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind, and the foole shall be servant to the wise in hearts.*

HE is sayd to trouble his house, which doth mispend his goods, and misguide his affayres, and misgouerneth his people that dwell with him. That either doth corrupt them with sinfulness, or molest them with frowardnes, or afflict them with misery. When he either maketh them patients to beare the bur-

then of his folly, or agents to commit folly with him. Hee shall inherit the wind, that is, shall bring all to nothing. His substance shall flie vp like smoak into the aire, and nothing be left to maintaine him on earth. And when all his goods are gone his liberty must goe after. This foole shall be seruant to the wise in heart, that is, to one who is more prouident, discreet and carefull for his state and houghhold. They were wont in great wants to sell themselves for seruants, as the Egyptians did in *Iosephs* time. And for greats debts to be taken by the creditors, and either made their bondmen, or else sold to others. And one of these, saith he, is like to be the case of this vnthrifts trouble-houle.

Gen 47.19.

Math 8.25.

Def.

He that would not vndoe himselfe, let him not disorder his family and domesticall affaires. It neerely concerneth an householder to know, that his house is laden with his whole estate, that his people saile together with him in the same vessell, for his vse. And if he will neither play the good Pilot himselfe in his owne place, nor suffer them to be good Mariners in theirs, how soone shall he runne his barke vpon the Rockes? how quickly shall he make shipwracke of all that he hath?

Reasons 1.

First, he takes the way to bring a curse vpon all, by due desert. The Lord hath made him a steward, and in diuers respects committed a trust vnto him, which he doth vnfaithfully discharge. He hath put his goods into his hands, to be orderly disposed of, as may be most for his glory; and those he expendeth vpon his owne lusts, and to Gods dishonour: and is it not iust then that they should be taken from him? He hath made him an euerser of the persons that liue vnder him, that he should be an example and guide vnto him in all vertuous behauiour, and he groweth to be a dissolute Master of Misrule, is it not equall that another should take his place of superiority, & he be made an vnderling?

2.

Secondly either his household is discouraged from diligence by his crooked peruerfenes, or else withdrawn from faithfulness by learning to be sinfull, and both of these tend one way, namely, to the overthrow of his estate.

Vse 1.

Admonition to be good gouernours of our families, and good husbands for our estates, not onely in conscience to obey God for our euermlasting saluation, but in Christian prouidence for

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for our present condition, if not to get, yet to saue, as to preferue our goods, so to retaine our freedome. For albeit that villenage and bondage be not now in vse among vs, yet imprisonment is not altogether out of vse. And every one is so farre in seruitude, & in the creditors power, as he wanteth ability to pay his debts. He may wel be said to be another mans seruante, whose state and liberty doth stand at another mans curtesie.

Terror for them that giue ouer themselves to such sinnes as be not only troublefome, but trouble it selfe to their houses. Those wee meane which cause the Gouernours to lay burthens vpon their inferiours, and God to lay iudgements vpon the Gouernours. We will not make mention of many, nor insist long vpon them which we mention. Pride must haue the first place, because it is predominant and carrieth a great sway among the rest. From it groweth contempt and disdain, contentions, railings, and all manner of imperious insolency. And for recompence thereof, and all the cursed effects which it produceth against God and man, the Lord threatneth to *destroy the house of proud men*. Whoredome and incontinency also worke much mischief to families, and most of all to the heads themselves.

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The holy Ghost in this booke, is very frequent in this point. As *the stranger shall be filled with thy strength, and thy labours shall be in the house of a stranger*. And, *because of the whorish woman a man is brought to a morsell of bread*. And Iob saith: that if hee should that way haue defiled himselfe, it would haue bin a fire de-

PROV. 15. 25.

PROV. 5. 10.

PROV. 6. 26.

Iob 31. 12.

nouring to destruction, & which would haue rooted out all his increase. Gaming, riot, and vnthriftnesse so apparantly shew themselves in this ranke, that it shal be needlesse to discourse of them. Only Couetousnes we will conclude with, which seemeth to be an help to raise vp an house, & yet vndermineth the very foundations of it. This maketh men fierce, and violent, bitter and cruell, like Beares, and Lions among their people. And this the Lord himselfe hath reckoned for one of these turbulent sinnes, and so would haue vs account of it. *Hee that is greedy of gain troubleth his owne house: but he that hateth gifts shall live*. As if he should say. If men be not weary of this wretched greedines, it will make them in al corrupt manner to pursue their commodi-

PROV. 15. 27.

dities, to the annoyance of theirs, till Gods wrath pursue them to death and undoing.

And whereas many proud persons, and vncleane, and couetous, hold vp their heads still, and decay not in state, they come not into other mens dangers, but haue many others fallen into their hands: yet let not men think there is a possibility of impunity, because they are not scourged with the least rod, but referred to a greater: for pouerty is one of the easiest punishments. What though they come not to inherit the wind here? yet if they inherit damnation in the world to come, what gaine they by the change? what though they be not brought to bee seruants to men? yet if they be seruants to sinne, presently, and shall receiue the wages of sinne hereafter, how much is their case the better?

Verse. 30 *The fruit of the righteous is as a tree of life, and hee that winneth soules is wise.*

THe meaning of these words is, that a godly man is very plentifull in bringing forth fruit, and his fruite exceeding profitable to them that receiue it. Especially his instructions consolations, prayers, & other spirituall means that he vseth, to conuert, or confirm the hearts of his brethren. And he himself also is not without the fruit of his owne fruit, which is intimated here by pronouncing him wise that winneth soules, that is, which with desire, and indeauour faithfully and discreetly, by Gods owne meanes, according to his place & calling either doth draw men out of their finnes and ignorance, or else faileth off successe therein, not by his negligence, and want of loue; but rather by their stubbornnesse and want of will. And herewith the Prophet doth satisfie himselfe, whatsoeuer should be the issue of his ministry. *Now saith the Lord that formed me from the wombe to bee his seruant: that I may bring Iacob againe to him, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord: and my God shall be my strength.* On the other side we dare not take vpon vs to iustific the hearts and states of al those which haue been occasions of any mans conuersion, if it be not their fruit: nor to extenuate the

the efficacy of euery vnregenerate mans ministry, that his doctrine should winne none to saluation. It is graunted without question, or gainesaying, that he may prepare before and build vp after, and we remember not any such stint or restraint spoken of, but that he may also conuert, especially before his life is stained with any sinfull behauiour, that might bring his ministry into contempt. The power of preaching standeth in the ordinance of God, by the worke of his spirit, and not in the person of the messenger, that doth publish it.

Of all people, none doe so much good as the godly. Look how *Doct.*
farre the tree of life, which was the best in paradise, excelled all the brambles and briars which are the worst on the wilde waste, so far doth such as feare God surmount the godlesse in goodnes. In the first Psalm, religious men which giue themselves to the exercise of piety are compared to trees: that yeeld the most, and best & ripest fruit: and sinfull men which giue themselves to the practise of vanity are likned to chaffe, or rather the dust of chaffe which is good for nothing. In the second of the Canticles the godly are resembled to the most beautifull and pleasant lilies *Psalm 1. 3.*
which yeeld delight to those that gather them; & the wicked to thornes or thistles which doe annoy those that meddle with them. In other places of scripture the seruants of God are called sheep, which for lambe of fleece, and flesh, and euery other way, are commodious, insomuch that they make the very ground the better which they sit vpon: and the slaues of sin are called by the names of Wolves, and Foxes, and such kind of beastes, which are very hurtfull, and be ready to do mischief wherfouer they come. In what respect the fruit of the righteous is so profitable, it will appeare by the proportion it hath with the tree of life, whereunto it is compared. First in regard of the cause, it is sayd *Reasons. 1.*
that it groweth by the riuer of life, whose waters seed the roote *Reu. 22. 2.*
thereof, and the roote sendeth vp the sap, and the sap sendeth out the fruit. And so the good which a good man doth, ariseth not from his wit, nor naturall disposition, nor fleshly wisdom, but springeth from the word, and spirit of GOD in his heart, *Gal. 5. 22.*

Secondly, as touching the manner thereof it is said that it is
con-

continually bearing without stay, or sayling, not once a yeere, but once in a moneth, not in sommer only, but in winter also, and euery time new kinds of fruit, and not of one sort alone (as it falleth out comonly with other trees, for in them the same branch neuer varieth the kind) and that rotte th not, nor dioppeth down with ripenesse. In like sort doth the spirit of grace make Gods children constant in well doing, and that also in performance of many duties, according to the variety of occasions and opportunities offered. *They ioyne vertue with their faith: and with vertue knowledge: and with knowledge temperance: and with temperance patience: and with patience godlinesse: and with godlinesse brotherly kindnes: and with brotherly kindnesse loue.* If they see the members of Christ hungry, they giue them meate; if thirsty, they giue them drink; if naked, they cloath them: if they be strangers, they lodge them: if they be sicke, they visit them; if they be in prison, they come vnto them, &c.

Ezech 47 12.

1 Pet. 1. 5 6.

Mat. 25. 35. 36

3

Prou. 10. 21.

Ise 1.

Thirdly, for the effect, the tree of life was for meat, and the leaues for medicine, and both for life: and no lesse vertue proceedeth from righteous persons, *their lippes doe feede many: their tongues are wholsome, their instructions are as a wellspring of life, so taine away from the snares of death.* Pro. 13. 14.

Admonition for euery one to search his waies, and to try his state by this rule. If thou be a fruitfull tree, thou art a righteous man: if thou be giuen to shew mercy, thou canst not be vnfruitfull; if thy labour be to kill sinne, and to helpe mens soules to euerlasting life, then who can deny thee to be truly mercifull? In this case though the Diuel come roaring with gricuous accusations; though he would perswade thee, that thou art an hypocrite; and they would perswade others, that thou art an arrogant proude person, yet be not dismayd at the matter. Satan saith, that thou bearest a dissembling heart, but GOD seeth that thou liuest a sincere life. They impute thy speeches, and other behauiour, to pride and vaine-glory: but thyne owne soule knoweth that they proceed from loue and vnfained faithfulness. And let this be spoken for thy comfort, that shall neuer faile thee, that those which are trees of life to men, are trees of delight to GOD himselfe, and he is nothing lesse pleased with them, than his people
are

of the *of the*

are benefited by them. And so the Apostle saith, they please God in all things, *which are fruitfull in all good works.* And so doth Christ speake of his Church, and the members thereof in *Salomons songs: My sister, my spouse, is as a garden inclosed. Thy plantes are as an orchard of Pomegranets, with sweete fruits, as Camphire, Spikenard, and Saffron, Calamin, and Cinamon, with all trees of Incense, Myrrhe, and Aloes, with all the chiefe spices.* But if thou be fruitlesse, thou art void of righteousness, and so destitute of Gods fauour, and thine owne safety. For vnfruitful trees hath GOD marked out to bee hewn down for firewood. But worse are they, by farre, and in more dangerous case, that bring forth too much fruit, but it is of the flesh, and to the flesh, works of pride, works of cruelty, cursed blasphemy and swearing, notorius riot, and vnchritines, drunkennes, filthines, contempt of Magistrates, contempt of Ministers, contempt of preaching, and malice against all godly Christians. *Their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the vines of Gomorah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters bee bitter. Their wine is the poison of Dragons, and the cruell gall of aspes.*

Col. 1, 10

Cant. 4, 12

13: 14

Math. 3, 10

Deut. 32, 33

33

2

Reproofoe of them that make litle account of these trees of life, then of a thorny hedge, then of nettles, then of most vnfauiory weeds, then of plants that bring forth deadly poison. They distaste no men so much as good men, & the better they are, the worse they like them. *Jeremy* came & offered his fruit to a people that stood in great need to eate of the tree of life: for they were ready to perish with death. But they practised to abolish that fruit which was offered for their preservation, and to take away his life, which sought to saue theirs. For so hath the Lord declared their conspiracy: *Let vs destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, & cut him out of the land of the living, that his name may be no more in memory.* Which almost of all the Prophets sped better? How much more fauorably was *Paul* dealt with? And especially Christ Iesus, the very tree of life, and Lord of life, & life it self, whom all the rest did but resemble? His perfect fruit they trampled on, & laboured to dig him vp by the root. And so they dealt til with his messengers and seruants, not making vie of their company, but abhorring it: not desiring to be partakers of

Jerem. 11, 19

their knowledge, and wisdom, and other graces, but to suppress them.

Deff. 2.

He that winneth soules is wise, &c. It is the note of a wise man, to shew mercy to mens soules. Fooles cannot easily find out the malady of sin; fooles faile of all experience of good medicines that may cure a sinful heart; fooles feele not the burthen of their owne iniquities, and therefore cannot be compassionate towards others for theirs. Only wisdom doth shew the disease, and the remedy, and moueth mens hearts in pity to helpe them that are infected with it. That which *Salomon* professeth to be true of himselfe, is also verified of euery good man in his measure; *7 he more wise Ecclesiastes was, the more he taught the people knowledge.* And to conuert it the other way: the more any man teacheth the people knowledge, the more wise he is.

Eccle. 12. 9.

Reasons. 1.

First, he performeth an acceptable seruice to God, which no foole can euer do. He is a diligent and profitable husbandman for feeding, weeding, and haruest worke. He is a valiant & skilful souldier to discomfit Satan his strongest enemy; to win his holds from him, and to rescue his spoile and captiues out of his hand. Yea not only to set his prisoners at liberty, but to win away the hearts of his owne souldiers, that they shall both forsake him, and set themselves in battel against him.

2

Secondly, he is very prouident for his owne good, and prepareth a blessed reward for himselfe, against the appearance of Iesus Christ. And of such men, and of that state, speaketh the Prophet Daniel: *They that make men wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turne many to righteousnes, shall shine as the starres, for euer and euer.*

Dan. 12. 3.

Use 1.

Incouragement to gaine mens soules to God, and saluation to mens soules, though we should lose that liking and fauor which was wont to be shewed to our selues. What though we be tearmed busie fooles for our labour? doth not God cleare vs, & say that we are wise men, and wel exercised? What though we be censured for silly creatures, that make our friends to be our foes? doth not God commend vs for our good prouidence in making him to be our friend? What though we draw vpon our selues contempt, displeasure, and persecution from wicked persons for the

the present? doth not God tell vs that we shall obtaine glory, and fauour, and peace at his hands for euermore hereafter? The godly esteeme vs to be wise; the holy Scriptures pronounce vs to be wise; our reward in time will shew vs to be wise: and shall the reproach of foolish men discourage vs from our wisdom?

Terror for them that corrupt mens soules, and labour with all their might to keepe men from comming to God. It is a blessed calling to be a fisher for God, as *Peter* was, and to catch men with the net of the word: but of al trades it is the worst to fish for Sarrans turne, and to kill men with the baites of sinne. Therefore is the case of the diuell the most miserable of al creatures, because he hath done more mischief this way then al the rest. And that causeth the Lord so grieuoussly to threatē the fals Prophets that kept men from repentance: and the false Apostles that hindred the work of the Gospel: and *Elymas*, and any that haue sought to peruert mens harts, or behaviour. It is not safe to depraue the Ministry, to weaken the power of it. It is not safe to intice men to Popery and superstition. It is not safe to perswad men to prophaneisse and neglect of Gods worship. If the naturall Serpent being but a beast was so plagued for being an instrument of Satan vnknowingly, and without desire to bring the woman into sin: what shal become of them that apply their wit, and tongue, and heart, and whatsoeuer they can, to doe him seruice herein?

Verse 31. *Behold, the righteous shall be recompenced on earth: how much more the wicked and the sinner.*

THE matter which he is about to speake of, is both certaine & waighy, and such as concerneth euery man to looke to in regard of his owne case: and therefore he prefixeth this word, *Behold*, to moue al to serious consideration of that which is to be said. And that is first touching the godly, that they must be corrected for their faults, when they offend, euen in such maner and measure as holdeth some proportion with their offences, though not in equality, for then who should be able to abide it? The word *recompence* therefore in this place is not taken for reuengement, or punishment proceeding from Gods indignation

but a louing chastisement, though it be sharpe according to the threatning of parents to their children, whom they be far from hating, or hurting: I will surely pay you for this. And that it shold appeare that nothing is intended against them, for the perill of their euertlasting state, there is a limitation annexed, that it is to be only in the earth. Next he sheweth the cōdition of the wicked, that if the righteous scape not scotfree, they must in no sort be spared, but feelee more heauy & fearful punishments, though not in the earth, yet in the world to come.

Dof.

The best must looke for stripes, if they wil take liberty to sinne against God. True it is that the Lord taketh not aduantage of infirmities, he passeth by thē, he winketh at them, he smiteth not his children for them: but whē they grow too bold, he wil nurture & awe them with correction. In this sence he may be said to be no respecter of persons, that as he will not endure the sinfulness of the wicked, though they be neuer so great: so he wil not allow of the sins of the godly, though they be neuer so good. The vertues that men haue, doe not warrant them to fall into any vice: their religion and graces doe not priuiledge them to do those things which are vnseemly for religicus and gracious persons to practise. Few points are more fully confirmed by manifest proofes then this. The Scriptures propose many examples, our eares haue heard many reports, our eies doe daily behold many presidents for this purpose, and they that wil not be perswaded by these, shal find it true by experience in themselves. What doleful complaints doth the Church make euery where in the Lamentations of *Jeremy*? Behold, O Lord, how I am troubled my bowels swell, mine heart is turned wthin me, for I am full of heavinesse; the Lords sword spoileth abroad, as death doth at home. The Lord is righteous; for I haue rebelled against his commandment. How lamentably do the godly bemoane themselves, and the state of the Church, in the prophecy of *Esaiah*? Be not angry, O Lord, above measure, neither remember iniquity for ever: for we beseech thee bebold, wee are all thy people. Thine holycities lie waste; Zion is a wilderness, and Ierusalem a desert. The house of our sanctuarie, and of our glory, where our father praised thee, is burnt vp with fire, and all our pleasant things are wasted. In what patheticall

Lam. 1, 18, 20

Isay 64, 9, 10

call manner doth the Prophet expresse the burden of his afflictions, in the booke of the Psalms? *Thine arrowes haue light vpon me, and thine hand lieth vpon me. There is nothing sound in my flesh, because of thine anger: neither is there rest in my bones, because of my sinne.* Psal 38, 2, 3

First, God herein respecteth his owne glory, who wil haue his people to know, that he doth look for seruice at their hands. If they performe it willingly they shal not faile to be rewarded for it: but if they grow carelesse & negligent to obey him, they shall be driue vnto it by compulsion. This was that which made both *Moses* and *Ieremie* bestir them, when God shewed his anger to the one, and threatened to destroy the other, for being so backward to vndertake their ministry: *Exo. 4, 14. Ier. 1, 17.* And the wicked shal see by this, that he is neither remisse toward al, nor partiall to any, when his commandement is not regarded. This seemeth to be one cause, why the Prophet that came to Bethel, & failed to fulfil that which was given him in charge, was so severely handled. He told *Ieroboam*, that God had straightly forbidden him either to eate or to drinke in that city, & yet *Ieroboam* might heare that hee had both eaten and drunken in the house of an other Prophet there, for which cause the Lord sent a Lion to kil him, that it might be knowne to *Ieroboam* and others, how dangerous it was for any to disobey his word. Reasons 1.

Secondly, he respecteth their good, though it might seeme to be better for them if they were wholly freed from all manner of troubles and crosses. How wanton, how froward, how stubborne would children be? Into what perils would they cast themselves, if they should be altogether exempted from the rod? They could neuer feeble the comfort of their parents fauour, vnlesse they sometimes found the smart of their displeasure. And so are the stripes and chastisements of God as needfull euery way to al his sonnes and daughters. They make vs the more carefull to beware of euil: they helpe vs to repentance when we haue fallne into euil: they confirme the loue of our heavenly father towards vs; they be occasions of his holinesse in vs: They bring the quiet fruit of righteousness vnto vs. Finally to knit vp al in few words; we are therefore recompenced with afflictions in the earth, that we shold not be punished with destruction in hel, but rewarded with. 1. Reg. 13. Feb. 12, 6, 10.

with euerlasting glory in heauen . And this the Apostle sheweth to be the cause why God scourgeth vs. *When we are indged, saith he, wee are chastened of the Lord, that wee should not be condemned with the world.*

3. Cor. 11. 32

Vse. 1.

4

Admonition to euery one that feareth God to looke well to his heart and waies, that he retaine the feare of God constantlie, & not be venturous to do any thing that may offend him. The Lord hateth sinne as wel in the godly as in the wicked, and will sooner smite the godly for his sin, then the wicked, though not so grieuouſlie. An example hereof was already shewne in the prophet Iſaie as he was going frō Bethel. *Ieroboams* transgressions were begun long before the fault that hee committed, and yet the stroke came vpon him for his fault long before the destruction of *Ieroboam* and his house. And let no man say, I am safe, because I am sure to be saued: he may fall into great misery in this life though he be in state of happines for the life to come. Freedome from perdition doth not free men from al maner of punishments. What plague besides destruction can Christians say, we shall certainly escape, vnlesse they be sure to escape such sinnes as may prouoke God to plague them? The Magistrate hath many punishments for offenders besides death, as the stocks, the goale, the whip, the pillary, &c. and God hath more iudgements besides damnatiō, as euery man may heare by the threatnings, and see by the execution, & feele by the burden of them. *Dauid* was as safe frō being condemned, as *Satan* is out of al

Psal. 31. 4. and
51. 8.

hope to be redeemed, & yet his calamities made him to groane, and crie, and roare, as he saith. His bloud was dried vp, his moyſture was like the draught of sommer. His torment was as great as if his bones had bene broken. And as a man should take encouragement by ought that is in himselfe, to do that which is displeasing to the Lord, so is there no care to be had that we be not led by the examples of other men, to doe any thing which the word doth not allow. Some hereby take liberty for breach of the Sabbath, some for gaming, some for one thing, some another. Good men, say they, vse these things, and why then may not we a' so? But it is no part of their goodnesse, say wee, and then why should you follow them therein at al? Their practise leadeth you to the y^e facts, but can it preserue you or theſelus from the re-ward

ward

ward thereof? The question is not therefore who they be that do it, but with what warrant, and how well they are like to speed for their doing.

Consolations in afflictions, that they disable vs not from being righteous, though they be compensations of sins for which we are not yet sufficiently humbled. We shal adde to our owne sorrowes, and needlesly increase the weight of our burdens, if we condemne our state, because the Lord correcteth vs for our faults; if we relinquish our hope of happinesse in heauen, because we are recompenced with iudgements on earth: it is allotted by God to the best of his seruants how to be dealt with.

How much more, &c. Euery wicked mans state is worse then *Dof.* any godly mans can be. Take the most prosperous of them all, euen such as the Prophet speaketh of, *that haue not aknowl to their death*, but the web of their life from the wombe to the graue, hath run with euen threed both in warpe & woof without any breach, & let him be compared with a Christian: that neuer saw merry day touching outward things, and he shal be found to be a miserable forlorne castiffe, in respect of this poore seruant of God. And indeed the tribulations and afflictions of good men do not bring them behind the wicked, but shew that the plagus and punishments of the wicked are yet behind. That reason our Sauour vsed to the women that lamented him as an vnfortunat man, and one forsaken of God: *Weepe not for me, saith he, but weep for your selues, and your children. For if these things be done to a grene tree, what shall be done to the drie?* This reason the Prophet *Jeremie* vsed to Gentiles bordering vpon Iudah, which thought that plagus had only belonged to the Church. *Loe, I begin to plague the citie, where my name is called vpon, and should you goe free? yee shall not goe quite, for I wil call for a sword vpon all the inhabitants of the earib, saith the Lord of hostes.*

Luk. 23. 28. 31

Jerem. 25. 31

And this reason *S. Peter* vseth against all impious and finfull persons: *The time is that iudgement must begin at the house of God. If it first begin at vs, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospell of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the vngodly and the sinner appeare?*

1. Pet. 4. 17.

First, the fauour and goodnesse of the Lord doth correct the one part, and that for their greatest good and happines; and his

wrath

wrath and vengeance doth pursue the other, and that for their greatest hurt and misery.

2 Secondly, the death & sufferings of Iesus Christ haue drunk vp the vengeance and curse of the afflictions of the one part, so that now there is nothing in them, but that which is medicinal and wholesome. And Gods iudgements, with their owne sinfulness haue put a sting into the troubles of the other, so that all that is in them is pestiferous and deadly.

3 Thirdly for the one part, the Lord knoweth what their strength is, and therefore will lay no more vpon them, then they are well able to beare: and for the other, he knoweth what their waies be, and will presse them with as much as they haue deserued.

4 Fourthly, the one part vndergo temporary tribulations here in earth, and al their sufferings wil end with their life: & the other shall suffer eternall paines in hell, and all their torments shal begin at their death.

Ps. 1.

Instruction not to be distempered, or discouraged at their insultations ouer vs in our troubles. They clap their hands and make a shout to see vs beaten at our fathers hands, or in the schoole: let them mocke on; & take their course, the officer is at their back to apprehend the, we shal see the sit in the stocks: we shall see them geiued with bolts vpon their heeles: we shall see them arraigned as malefactors: we shall see them condemned & executed as traytors against the Maiestie of God. And as there is no cause why wee should bee troubled at their insolency, so is there no reason why we should be moued at their prosperity. We should make our selues more miserable then we are: if we should like our owne case the worse, because they deride vs, & we should iudge them more happy then they be, if wee should think their state the better, because they applaud thei selues. Let vs in compassion pittie the particulars, & pray for them, but neuer esteeme their condition so comfortable, as to wish it for our selues, or to grudge it to them. And because our eyes are much dazeled with externall shewes of things present, the holy Ghost

Pro. 23. 16, 20. doth giue vs a caueat to take heed of the same: *Fret not thy self because of the malicious, neither be enuious at the wicked. For there shall be none end of plagues to the enuill man: the light of the wicked shall be put out.*



AN EXPOSITION OF THE TWELFTH CHAP- TER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *He that loveth correction, loveth knowledge: but he that hateth correction, is brutish.*



*H*e that loveth instruction,) Which doth apply himselfe to seeke it, by those meanes which are ordained of God for his people to be instructed by, and accepteth & maketh use of it, when it is offered to him, *he loveth knowledge*, that is, hath it in due estimation, and truly desireth it, and therefore shall al-

so accordingly obtaine it. *But he that hateth correction*, which refuseth all instruction, but especially will not indure to be reproved, or corrected, *he is brutish*, a beast in a mans shape, a foole in a high degree of folly, both for an ignorant minde and rude behaviour, and wretched condition.

Every mans desire of grace and saluation, may be tried by his *Dott. 1.* affection to the meanes thereof. He that is diligent in seeking, is willing to figd, as he that setteth himselfe to make speede in his way, hath a mind to his iournies end. So the Lord speaketh of the godly in one place of *Isaiah*, that they shall say: *Come, let vs* *Isai. 2. 3.* *goe up to the mountaine of the house of the Lord, that he may teach*

vs his waies, and we may walk in his paths. And so the godly speake to the Lord in another place of Ilaiah: The desire of our soule is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soule haue I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me will I seeke thee in the morning.

Reasons. 1. First, the same spirit that draweth men to liking of the one, doth also worke a loue of the other: for both are wrought by the Holy Ghost.

2 Secondly, all the ordinances of God for mans saluation are contrary to flesh and blood, and therefore no man can take anie delight in them further then he looketh to the end, and is refreshed with comfortable effects in the way.

3 Thirdly no man can desire the holy knowledge of God with truth and seruency, vnlesse he haue had some taste of the fruit of it, & he that hath tasted of the fruit, hath profited by the meanes, and he that hath profited by the meanes, will loue them euer afterwards. They that finde the comfort of life, haue formerly felt the benefit of food: and they that are desirous to continue their life, are not vnwilling to receiue their foode: and they that hunger after foode, for the continuance of life, haue also an appetite to it in regard of the relish.

use. 1. Refutation of their boastings, that goe before all in speaking of their desire and forwardnes to please God, and be sau'd, and come behinde euery one, in shewing any good notes of it. They make their mowthes and not their hearts, the principall seat of their loue: and likewise their words, and not their deedes, their onely arguments do proue that they doe loue. It is very burdensome for them to liue constantly vnder a faithfull Ministry. E- uery godly sermon is tedious to them; for length, if it bee not ended within the houre: for the manner, if it saour not of humane wit and eloquence; for the matter if it be wholesome, and liuely, and come home to the rebuking of any sinne, which they are not minded to forsake. And yet they would haue vs all to know, that none are better friends then they to knowledge. And yet they must giue vs leaue againe to tell them that euery friend of knowledge is better affected then they are, to instruction.

Consolation to them that thinke it no paines to be painfull in labour

labouring for the bread of life. They seele not, they say, the loue of the word of God, the desire of faith and care of repentance, &c. But from whence proceedeth that? is it not hence, that they are greedy and couetous of getting abundance of loue and desire, and therefore they thinke that which they haue to bee nothing in comparison of that which they would haue. But these men must be well confuted: their troubles, their attention, their meditations, their pains, their reading, their questions, their conference, their ioy in Christian company, their diligence in all good exercises with willingnes, doth manifestly shew the error of their doubts and feares. But may not an hypocrite do all these things, and yet haue no touch in him? But may an hypocrite do all these things in good earnest with resistance of hypocrisie? May an hypocrite continue an hypocrite, and yet bewaile his want of sincerity in the presence of God alone, with promise, and purpose to performe euery seruice more sincerely, if possibly by any means he may be able? It was an argument wherewith *Dauid* confirmed his owne hart in assurance that he truly loued the Lord, and vnfaignedly sought his owne saluation, because he loued the law of the Lord, meditated in his word, and kept his precepts. And *Iob* taketh it for a sure effect of his vprightness, that he had not departed from the commandements of Gods lips, but esteemed the words of his mouth more then his appointed foode.

Is brutish, &c. They that wil not be schooled of God to learne Christian knowledge, are no better than if they had no manner of knowledge. They are not all children that hate this kinde of correction: they are not all naturals: they are not all ideots, but they are all starke fooles. Then many haue been fooles, and yet learned Philosophers: and many haue bin fooles, and yet deep Politicians: and many haue bin fooles, and yet euery way worldly wise men. This doth God charge vpon the multitude, the greater number of a whole people: *They are a nation void of* *Doct.*
counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. Oh that they were wise: then they would understand this, they would consider their latter end. Yea the wittiest of them are so reputed in the prophecy of *Ieremy*: *My people is foolish, they haue not known me:* *De. 32. 28, 29.* *Ierem. 4. 22.*

they are foolish children, and haue none vnderstanding: they are wise to do euill, but to do well they haue no knowledge.

Reasons 1.

First, their carnal wisdom is altogether vn sufficient to make them seruiceable to God, or any thing which they doe to be acceptable vnto him, and it standeth them in no stead for their credit. For those which be vile in his eies, shall in time be base in the sight of men: and the punishment of their folly in the end, shall make it appear they were fools all the time before. Of this point speaketh the Prophet: *The wisemen are ashamed, they are afraide and taken, be they haue reiected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?*

Jerem. 8. 9.

2

Secondly, their carnall wisdom can neither preserve them from death, nor prepare them to die blessedly. It cannot stay their life from going, neither can it stop the curse from coming.

3

Thirdly it cannot deliuer them from damnation in the world to come, but rather increase the grieuousnes of their punishment. It hath kept possession against his holy vnderstanding, it hath made them vncapable of all good instructions: it hath made them impatient of any rebuke: it hath held them in ignorance and disobedience all their life, and see what their ignorance will bring them vnto after their owne death: *The Lord Iesus shal shew himselfe from heauen with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them, that know not God, & which obey not the Gospel of our Lord Iesus Christ.* Now lay all these things together, and see wherein any man is betted by any knowledge or wisdom which is ioyned with contempt of grace. Doth he think to please God the better? the more is he offended. Doth he hope to win credit by it? it will bring him to shame. Would he haue it to keep him from troubles? it will draw him into them. His death is made the more vncomfortable and bitter, and his destruction following much more horrible and fearfull.

2. Thes. 1. 8.

Reas. 2.

Admonitions to take heed that we conform not our opinions to the iudgement of the world, for that is directly contrary to the testimony of God. Carnall reason, and sturdy affections, and vnbrideled tongues say, that they are fooles which will digest reprooves and checks, and suffer themselves to be censured, but the heavenly wisdom and diuine truth, the sacred scriptures

tutes

tures say, that they are wise which harkē to the rebukes of Gods holy word : and fooles as bad, as beasts that despise them. *Ob.* But men will laugh at our simplicity, if we sit downe by such indignities. *Resp.* But GOD will laugh at our miseries if we quarrell with admonitions and counsels, when he vouchsafeth them vnto vs.

Prou. 1. 26.

Verse 2. *A good man getteth fauour of the Lord: but a man of wicked imagination will be condemne.*

A Good man, which setteth his heart to deuise of goodnes, and performeth the same in practise, *getteth fauour of the Lord*, that is, inioyeth the assurance and comfort of his louing kindnes in his soule, and the good effects thereof both in soule and body, and euery other way. *But a man of wicked imaginations, &c.* It is the description of a wicked man by a periphrasis, that he is as it were made of sinfull thoughts, and purposes, and is in the midst of them.

A good man may sometimes haue euill imaginations, as *David* had to destroy the whole house of *Nabal*, but it was the imagination of the man, and he was not a man of such imaginations. *Hee will condemne &c.* The displeasure of God against him is declared by the effect, hee will conuince him, and finde him guilty, that is, passe sentence vpon him, and cause execution to be done accordingly. Thus then standeth the opposition : A good man of godly meditations getteth fauour of the Lord, who therefore will saue him; but an euill man of wicked imaginations, incurreth the displeasure of the Lord, who therefore will condemne him.

A man can no way be made so happy as by beeing in Gods fauour. If any other thing were better then this, it would here be named; for his purpose is to promise and perform the best. Good men do set their wits on work to find the way whereby they may most please him, and he doth set his wisdom on work to frame a recompence that may best pleasure them.

Doct. 1.

What account *David* and others made of the fauor of God, is shewed in diuers places of the Psalmes, as when they breake out
so

So earnestly into prayer, and redouble their petition, *Turne vs againe O Lord God of hosts: cause thy face to shine vpon vs, and wee shall be saved.* That is, helpe vs out of our captiuitie: restore vs to the place and meanes of thy worship: let vs feele the testimonies of thy loue, and our state will be bleisfed and happy. So where the same is acknowledged with thankfulnessse. *Thy louing kindnes is better then life: therefore my lips shall praise thee.* Neither is this only *Dauids* testimony, or feeling, or estimation of Gods loue towards him, but many others haue made such precious account thereof, as that they indured the losse of all their substance, and liberty, and life it selfe, and that with bitter paines and torment, rather then they would do any thing that might moue the Lord to be angry with them.

Psal 80.19.

Psal. 63.3.

Heb. 11.36.37

Reasons 1.

First, in regard of the rarenes of it, it is a flower which groweth only in Gods own garden. It is a priuledge and freedome peculiar and proper to the children of God: the Lord neuer giueth good countenance to a wicked person, his anger is euermore towards sinners: whereas in all earthly things, they are commoners with vs, and commonly haue the greater share. It is therefore the more precious, because it is but for few, and those thereby both made and declared to be excellent, hauing no vnworthy person of their company to disgrace them.

2

Secondly, in regard of the continuance of it, it is not worn out by time, it vanisheth not away: it is neuer taken from them, vpon whom it is bestowed. Their faults may cause it to be hid from them for a season (as *Dauid* felt by wofull experience, when hee had committed that grieuous sinne of murder and adultery) but lost it cannot be, nor long concealed; for it will work in them the grace of humiliation, that they may behold it to their ioy and comfort.

3

Thirdly, in regard of those singular good effects wherewith it is alwaies accompanied, what is desireable here in this world, that it will not yeeld vnto vs? And what happinesse is there in the world to come, that it will not aduance vs vnto?

Defence from enemies, and safety from dangers euery creature seeketh after, and this doth Gods goodnesse bring to euery one that is godly. *Then Lord (saith Dauid) wilt blesse the righteous,*

Psal. 5.12.

and

and with fauour wilt compasse him, as with a shield.

Gladnesse of heart, & comfort is that which euery man much affecteth, and this is the loue and faueur of God doth minister to all those that be partakers of it. And this doth *David* also profess himselfe to haue experience of, and therefore preferreth the louing countenance of the Lord before all the commoditics and pleasures which worldly men so much long after. *Many say, who will shew vs any good, but Lord lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs. Thou hast giuen me more ioy of heart, then they haue had, when their wheat and their wine did abound.* It is needlesse to reckon vpon other things, since the sufficiency of all good things is inferred by these, otherwise there were not so much safety, neither would there be so great ioy and gladnesse.

Instruction, that our chiefe care and indeauour be to please the Lord, seeing that so great a benefit proceedeth from it. Euery one of his seruants hath great wages in hand, if he had nothing else but his Masters good will. It is said of all others that men cannot liue by their faire speeches, and good countenance; but let God looke cheerfully vpon vs, and speake comfortably to vs, and sure we are that we are in no want. Our present pay is better preferment then any mortall creature can raise vs vp to, though he were the most mighty monarch on the earth, besides all that remaineth for the time to come, especially when we shall haue so neere access to the presence of our heavenly father, wherein is the fulnesse of ioy; and at whose right hand there are pleasures for euer more.

Consolation to them that haue receiued vndoubted testimonies of the fauor of God. Blessed are they presently, though men discern not how happy they are made by it: but more blessed shall all the world behold them to be at that great day, and glorious appearance of our Lord Iesus Christ. The consideration of the terror that will be at that time, made *S. Paul* himselfe to labour, that both in life and death he might be acceptable to him, as knowing that most fearefull is their state whom he shall then be displeased with: and thise happy beyond all that mortall mans thought can comprehend, to whom he then shall declare his kindnesse. But in the meane time, say to me, they be maligne

igned and molested more then any, & none haue so many enemies as they. But who knoweth whether Gods fauour may not make men fauorable to the? It is said that when the waies of a mā please the Lord, he wil make also his enemies at peace with him. *Prov. 16. 7.* Or if they be implacable, and mighty also, yet this is the comfort of the faithfull, that God himselfe will ouerlive them, and his might will ouermatch them, & his louing kindnes will bee exercised dayly, as *Dauid* told that bragging *Dorg*; *Psal. 52. 1.*

Dof. 2.

The man of wicked imaginations, &c. The Lord doth not onely proceed against the wicked for their vngodly actions, but for sinfull thoughts and purposes. But the prosecution of this point we referue for the six and twentieth verse of the fifteenth chapter, where it is said that the thoughts of the wicked are abomination to the Lord.

Verf. 3. A man cannot be established by wickednes; but the roote of the righteous cannot be moued.

Sinfulnesse may seem to serue a mans turne, but in the end it shall appeare it neuer did him good. For howsoeuer it is an occasion of lifting many mē vp on hie in prosperity, yet it giueth them no sure footing in their state, but down they fall, and then it had been better for them to haue stood still on the ground. Wicked men often grow greater, and faster then others, but their setting is not so fast and firme, as the other part sheweth. The righteous though they be not so tall and spreading vpwards, yet they take roote the stronger downwards: and though their boughes be shaken about, yet that will not loosen his hold beneath. This is the opposition, The vngodly shall not be established by wickednes, but his root shall be plucked vp; but the righteous shall be established by godlines, and his root shall not be moued.

Dof. 1.

They shall misse of their expectation, that hope to succour themselves by sinning. They apply a venomous plaster to their sore: they drinke strong poyson for a medicine: and they prop vp their rooffe with burning firebrands. But the holy Ghost directeth

recteth euery one of vs to a course directly contrary to this in the booke of Iob : *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it farre away, and let no wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacle. Then truly shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, and shalt be stable, and shalt not feare.* And he doth indent with them whom he will deliuer from death and misery, that they shall confesse that their wickednesse could stand them in no stead : *If one say, I haue sinned, and perueried righteousness, and it did not profit me, he will deliuer his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light,* Iob. 33. 27. 28.

Iob 11. 14.

Saul dealt very foolishly, in vndermining the foundation of his house by disobedience, and the seeking to hold it vp by persecuting of *Dauid* : And *Ieroboam* dealt not wisely, who (when the Lord promised to build him a sure house, as he built to *Dauid*, if he would keep his statutes and commandements : as *Dauid* did) deuised another trick to confirme the kingdome to himselfe and his posterity, and that was by setting vp the idolatrous Calues at Dan and Bethel.

1. Reg. 11. 38.

First, it is the very proper effect of sinne to procure ruine, and to bring men to a downfall. And thereupon the Prophet *Hosea* doth ground his exhortation : *O Israel returne vnto the Lord thy God : for thou hast fallne by thine iniquity.* Hof. 14. 2. As if he should haue said, Let experience make you wise: neuer trust to sinne any more, but seeke vnto God : for looke what successe you finde by your euill waies now, the same be sure of euer: no man can speed by such a bad meanes.

Reasons 1.

Secondly, the rising, standing, and falling of euery man is in Gods owne hand, who alone setteth vp, and confirmeth, and casteth downe at his will. And how then can sinne yeeld any stability to sinners, which haue his wrath, and threatnings, and oath, and hand against them? It cannot draw kindnes from him, to assist them in fauour. Force will be of no force to compell to it by feare. And wisdom makes it impossible to intice him to it by craft.

2

Thirdly, if men might haue establishment by wickednes, many absurd and dangerous consequents would follow vpon it. The curses of the Law would bee of small effect: the most sinfull shifters would make their state the surest: and Satan should be-

3

R

come

come their beneficial friend, whose soules are most peruerbed by him.

Vse. I.

Instruction, that forasmuch as we may know that we shal lose our labour in seeking any sinfull helpees, that Gods displeasure will be increased, our misery increased, our guiltinesse increased, and every thing increased that may increase our sorrow and torment: that therefore henceforth we deceiue our selues no more in expecting help at that which altogether turneth to our hurt. We would al stand as firm, and as impregnable castles, but we make a quick sand our foundation, & mud wals our stone work, & stubble and reedes our strongest timber. It would grow to a large volum if we should relate the seuerall kindes of sinnes where by we haue sought to serue our owne turnes, as falschood in word by lying, falshood in deed by stealing, & deceitfulnesse of diuers sorts, flattery, couetousnesse, cruelty, hypocrisie, running to witches: and what not? But many volumes are not able to containe the particular facts whereof we stand guilty, only Gods book, and that of our owne conscience are capacious enough for them. And therefore it is time for vs to pul down our owne ruinous building, least it fal downe vpon our heads, and make vs fal downe to destruction. For though it be too slight, and as weake as cobweb to be a couer ouer vs, yet it is very heauy, and as weighty as a mountaine to presse vs vnder it. Let vs seriously consider, that whatsoeuer is offensiueto God cannot be defensiueto vs, and that which doth bring any perill to the soule, can neuer possibly bring safety to state or body. Away then from our owne deuises, from al fleshly & vnlawfull meanes of helpe, and let vs run with speed to him that neuer failed to succour any that vnfainedly sought help at his hands. And this may be our encouragement hereunto, that we go not vnseent, nor come vnbidden. His owne wil, his owne word calleth vpon vs with many promises for that purpose: *If thou returns to the Almighty, thou shalt bee built vp, and thou shalt put iniquity far from thy tabernacle. The Almighty shal be thy defence, and thou shalt haue plenty of siluer. When others are cast downe thou shalt say, I am deliued vp: and God shall saue the humble person.* Job 22. 23. 25. 29.

Vcrse.

Verse 4. *A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband: but shee that maketh him ashamed is a rottennesse in his bones.*

A *Vertuous woman*, which feareth God, and loueth her husband, and is faithful in her calling, *is a crowne to her husband*, she is for his honour and credit, and consequently for his profit and comfort. *But shee that maketh him ashamed*, which either by her lewdnes and rudenesse, doth bring him into contempt, or at least maketh him to hold downe his head, or by negligence, pride and wastfulnesse doth weaken his estate, and bringeth him to want, *she is a rottennesse in his bones*, that is, a torment and corrasie to his heart, as grievous as the ach of the bones, or corruption of the marrow, which is more painfull and incurable then an vlcen in the flesh. The antithesis is thus: *A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband*, and so a great ioy and gladnesse to his heart: but a vicious woman is a shame to her husband, and as a rottennesse in his bones.

No outward thing in all the world is better then a good wife. *Doct.* It is not so well with a rich man that hath his house stored with abundance of wealth, as with a poore man that hath his house garnished with a Christian wife, so that hee be also a godly man, and a faithfull husband. By this meanes hee may be made conspicuous, though his state and degree were otherwise obscure: and it is lawfull in this sort for a meane subiect, without disloyalty to his Prince, to weare a crowne of good reputation and credit. If the valew and brightnesse of pearles and precious stones draw mens eyes to behold them that possesse and weare them, much more will this rich iewell, whose price and beaurty exceedeth the best of them. For God himselfe who seeth every sort of them, and euery one of them, and knoweth their seuerall worths, and hath made them all, he setteth a gracious wife at an higher rate then any of them, and saith, *that her price is farre aboue Carbuncles.*

Prou. 31. 10.

First, they are very scarce and hard to come by, and therefore *Reasons. 1.* it is said, *Who shall finde a vertuous woman?* There are incomparably more wiues then God will praise for good wiues, and more

Prou. 31. 10.

maides and widowes then hee will commend to good men to match with. As therefore those that are gracious are rare, so are they also the more remarkable, and so they more adorne their husbands. If crownes were as commonly worne as hats, men would esteeme of hats, as much as of crownes.

2
Prou. 8. 12.
Secondly, good wiues to godly men are all of the Lords providing, he made the match in mercy and fauour, and therefore the more to be regarded. He more immediatly declareth his loue in this, then in bestowing lands, and liuings, or any other goods or substance. So saith the Scripture: *House and riches are the inheritance of the fathers: but a prudent wife commeth of the Lord:* Prou. 19. 14.

3
Thirdly, man hath more interest in his wife then he can haue in any other creature. She is appropriated to him with neereſt bonds of vnion. She is not so properly called his, as a part of him, and one flesh with him. As the two parts of man, soule and body make one person; so two persons, man and woman, make one matrimoniall bodie. Then how should he not take comfort in her graces and gifts, which are made his owne together with her?

4
Fourthly, the benefits which a vertuous wife doth bring to a worthy husband, are manifold, and worthy to be regarded. She will labour to refresh his heart with comfort, and to preserve his body in health: she will be a helper for his family, and prouident for his state, she will be tender of his credit, and cheerefull to his friends: she will euery way apply her selfe to shew her loue, and procure his best prosperity. These we shall handle particularlie in the one and thirtieth chapter, if God permit vs to proceed so farre. Contrary to the waies of this good woman is the behaviour of a bad wife, who worketh both shame and griefe to her husband. All her sinfulness maketh him ashamed, vnlesse hee be shamelesse, which is his greater shame. A wicked sonne is a blot to his father, and a disordered seruant is no credit to his maister, and therefore much more doth an vngodly wife disgrace, and blemish her yoke-fellow. And as she putteth matter of talke into other mens mouthes, so she laieth burdens vpon his backe, and poureth sorrowes into his heart by contempt, and wrongs, and indignities.

indignities. Oh the calamity of them that are put to harbour their enemies harlots in their owne beds and bosoms ! And what a misery is it for a man, to commit the greatest part of his substance to her that is a priuy theefe, whereby she hath all before her, to choose what shee will to rob him of ! And hard is their case whose wiuues are meete spies to know, and discouer, and publish abroad their secrets, and faults, and infirmities to their great reproach. And what shall we speake of such as are (swinish with drunkennesse) and of gadders, and busie bodies abroad ; which in all contentions are alwaies parties, and wherefocuer they come, they raise contentions ? What comfort doe these women minister to their husbands that loue peace and sobriety. As for such as are turbulent in their owne houses, and froward, and rebellious against their head, the spirit of God telleth vs, what profitable, pleasant, and amiable companions they be. In the nineteenth chapter of this booke it is sayd, that *the contentions of a wife are like a continuall dropping.* Consider what vexation it is for a man to haue raine falling fast vpon his head, and body, especially if there be no intermission that he may dry himselfe againe : and most of all if it be through the roose of his house to rot his timber, and spoile his stufte, and take away the comfort of his meate and rest : when at bed and boord, and euery where, he shal be as it were vnder a running spout. And elswhere he affirmeth, *that it is better to dwell in a corner of the house top* (that is on a pinnacle vpon the top of the house without) *then with a contentious woman in a wide house.* And yet more in the same chapter, *that it is better to dwell in the wildernesse among wild beasts, then with a contentious and angry woman.* Prou. 19. 13.

Instruction to such as be vnmarried to haue principall respect of vertue and grace in their choice. As for parentage, personage, portion, and other things of like nature, let them be regarded, if they wayt vpon religion, and piety, otherwise suffer them not to put wiuues vpon you, or rather presse sorrow, and shame vpon you, as many feele to their woe, which only looke to outward things. Prou. 21. 9.

2. To such as are married, if God hath vouchsafed them that mercy to giue them vertuous women, let them both giue him the

praise, and take the comfort to themselves, whether they be rich or poore, and vse al good vse and encouragement to such good yoke fellowes. A iust testimony and commendations of them, & sometimes vnto them, sufficient allowance both of liberty and maintenance, according to their husbands ability, is due vnto them, in equity and iustice. But whatsoeuer their ability is, they are able to shew kindnesse, and good countenance to them, and that must not bee wanting. Saint *Paul* would haue husbands to loue their wiues therfore, because they are wiues, and to be bitter to none, much lesse to be fierce, and churlish, and boysterous to them that are good. But if they be yoked with those of the other sort, their misery is a good motiue to send them to God to seeke his helpe, and more to labour to please him themselves, that hee may make their wiues to be better vnto them. For if it be in his hand before mariage to make them godly, and to prepare them for his seruants, it is as much also in his power to conuert them afterwards: which if he do not, yet they shall haue more strength to beare the burden with greater ease.

2

Reproofe of their sinne and folly, that like nothing lesse, nor labour against any thing so much as to haue their wiues to be religious and godly. They more hate piety and grace, then they loue beauty and wealth, and would sooner chuse one of no substance, then of great goodnesse. But indeed they are not driuen to that extremity, it is no difficult matter to many that haue great riches, to be of little sanctification, and therefore they haue their desires double satisfied in getting wealth & wickednes together. How many doe we dayly see, that withhold their wiues from all good meanes of godlines: that dissuade them, discourage them, and sometimes by strong hand, restrain them from comming to the preaching of Gods holy word, whereby their soules might bee instructed? How many teach their wiues pride, and straine themselves beyond their ability to maintaine them in garishnes? How many do bring their wiues into such company, and to such exercises, as infect their eyes, and eares, and tongues, and heart, and euery sense with lust and wantonnesse? Is it not righteous from God that these husbands should bee plagued with the lauishnesse,

uifhneffe, and stubbornneffe; and whorifhneffe of their wiues which haue fo poyfoned their foules, and drawne them to fuch lewd and finfull behauiour?

Verfe. 5. *The thoughts of the iuft are right: but the counfels of the wicked are deceit.*

Godly men are not altogether voide of thoughts, that are not right and allowable: fometimes Sathan cafteth in matter to turne them out of the right courfe: fometimes their owne flefh will play it part, and ftir vp defires of commodity and praife, and pleasures and fuch like in them: but thefe are as the muddineffe that may be for a time in a good fountaine that is troubled: thefe they allow not: thefe they refift, and iudge themfelues for, and therefore God taketh notice only of them that are good tending to his fervice, and glory, their owne faluation, and the benefit of their brethren. On the other fide, *the counfels of the wicked*, that is their deuifes, plots, and purpofes in themfelues (for they are here rather the worke of the mind then of the tongue, and oppofed to the thoughts of the godly) are deceit, tending either to the circumuention, and wronging of others, or to the cloaking and hiding of their owne finfulneffe.

The godly differ as much from the wicked in inward cogitations and purpofes, as in outward conuerfation and praetife. At the firft creation man was made to excell the brute beaftes more by the reafon and gifts of the foule, then by the fafhion & fhape of the bodie: and at the fecond, a Chriftian is made to excell finfull men more by the holineffe and working of the foule, then by the aetions and workes of the body. This caufed the Apoftle S. Paul to vrge the Ephesians with fo earneft an affeueration and attettation, that hereby they fhould cleere their regeneration vnfalible, and put it out of all doubt and queftion. *This I fay, and teftifie in the Lord, that yee henceforth walke not as other Gentiles walke in vanitie of their mind, hauing their cogitations darkned &c.* And Ifaiah commeth to fpeake of fome fpeciales, and fheweth what a contrariety there is betweene their thoughts and meditations. *The beafts, faith he, of a niggard will worke iniquitie bee deuifed*

Doct.

miseth euill counsels to vndoe the poore with lying words: but the liberal man will deuise of liberal things, and will continue his liberality.
Ila. 22. 6. 7. 8.

Reasons. 1.

First the one sort are led by the word and spirit of God, and therefore will thinke of such things as they worke in them, and perswade them vnto; the other are led by the flesh, and Sathan, and therefore will thinke of such things as they suggest.

2

Secondly the hearts of the one are replenished with Christian loue, and therefore they will meditate how they may best exercise it in doing good: and the other are possesse with selfe-loue, and they will deuise how they may serue their owne turnes though with neuer so much hurt and mischief.

3

Thirdly, the treasures of the one are in heaven, and therefore their hearts are there, and their thoughts are taken vp about heavenly things; and the happinesse of the other is in earth, and sin, and therefore they are alwaies pondring of earthly and sinfull matters.

4

Fourthly, the heart and purpose is the roote from whence the actions spring and receiue their life, & therefore good men could not performe so many good seruices, and haue them so well accepted of God, and the wicked would not fall into so many foule sinnes, and be so much hated of him, vnlesse they had contrary mindes and affections, the godly holy and righteous, and the wicked impious and deceitfull.

Vse. 1.

Instruction to examine and trie the state of our soules by this rule, let vs consider not onely what we haue done, and how men conceiue of vs, but with what mind we haue performed euery good duty, and how the Lord doth esteeme of vs. He trieth the reines, he seatcheth the heart, he looketh vpon the purposes, and desires. That which no creature seeth or taketh knowledge of, he praiseth, and rewardeth, that which the world admireth and magnifieth, he hateth and abhorreth. So our Sauour told the Pharisees, *Yee are they which iustifie your selues before men: but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.*

Luke 16. 15.

2

Reproofe of them that turn their hearts loose, permitting their thoughts to straggle whither soeuer they will at their pleasure,
and

and thinke it ſafe to ſatiſſie themſelues in filthy luſts, in proud imaginations, in bitter grudgings, and in diuers idle, vaine, and fooliſh conceits. It is accounted by many for a part of mans liberty that thought is free: but they that take that liberty are brought into the moſt grievous ſeruitude, to become ſlaues and bondmen to thoſe free thoughts. Now if deceitfull counſels conuince men to be euill, as the Scripture ſaith they doe, what can the Papiſts ſay for themſelues, why they ſhould be reputed good? Did euer any kinde of people lay their plots for greater miſchiſes? Did euer any ſecke to act their purpoſes with greater falſhood and treachery? What fidelity is to bee found in their words, in their proteſtations, in their ſolemne oathes? They ſay many things, which the purpoſe of not doing them is the cauſe why they ſay them. Then they pretend the moſt obedience when they intend the greateſt diſobedience: and looke for ſome notable diſloyalty from them, when they are ready to ſwear to be loyall.

Verſe 6. *The talking of the wicked is to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the righteous will deliuer them.*

THeſe words are not to be vnderſtood to meane all ſorts of wicked men, but ſuch as are malicious: and their ſpeeches too, of ſuch as they maligne, do principally tend to the inſnaring and catching of them, and that to their deſtruction, ſo far as they can effect it: if not by violence vpon their bodies to the taking away of their liues, yet by oppreſſion otherwiſe to the ruine of their eſtate. Now the contrary is to be ſoſſed in the godly, who uſe their lips, as much as in them is, to ſuccour ſuch as the wicked lie in wait for: either as *Pauls* nephew did, by diſcouering the practiſes againſt them, or being ſuiters for them, or clearing their innocency. And this is ſpoken of their endeauour, & not of the euent, for that is many times otherwiſe.

Lie in wait, &c. It is the property of violent men to mixe their Deſ. 11.
cruelty with craftineſſe.

Their tongues worke as well as their hands, and their heartes and heads giue direction to their tongues: and hands, and

S

tongues,

tongues, and hearts, and heads doe all conspire and combined themselves against poore innocents. Such the Prophet complaineth of in the Psalmes : *He lieth in waite secretly, euen as a lion in his denne: he lieth in waite to spoile the poore : he doth spoile the poore when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth and boweth: & there fore heapes of the poore do fall by his might.*

Many deuices deceitfull tongues haue to bring their purposes to passe. Sometimes by flattery, or otherwise to draw aduantage from him whom they practise against, according as our Saviour was sundry times dealt with. Sometimes by incensing, or perswading others, whose displeasure and power may worke that which themselves could neuer effect, as *Haman* did, & *Amaziah*, and *Daniels* aduersaries also, though in another manner: *Dan. 6.* Sometimes by taking opportunity of the time when it serueth them, as *Doeg* did against the Priests, when *Saul* himselfe was offended with *Jonathan*, for fauoring *Dauid*. Who can reckon all when there are so many, and euery day new inuentions of mee?

Reasons. 1.

First, the diuell is their director, & teacheth them what course to take, and all the world knoweth and feeleth that hee is both fierce and subtil, being a bloody red dragon for cruelty, & hauing seuen heads for craft.

Secondly, their owne study and exercise hath made them expert and skilfull in their hellish trade: and the tast of blood hath made them as hungry as hounds after it.

Use 1.

Instruction to auoide as much as we may, both conuersation and conference with them. Of receiuing harm, we stand in great perill of effecting good we can haue little expectation. It is no hard matter for the foxe or lion to make the lambe to feele their wiliness or violence, but it is not easie for the lambe to teach the lion, or foxe, his innocency.

But the mouth, &c. It is a note of a good man to haue his good word ready to help them that are oppressed.

Doct. 2.

There be many that refraine from traducing, accusing, and intrapping their neighbours, which yet goe not farre enough to shew themselves mercifull and righteous: there are many that will speake in the praise of godly men, free from troubles and molesta-

moleſtations, and yet declare not ſufficient loue to God and his people: but here is loue, here is courage, here is faithfullnes, herein they make it appear that they are not accepters of perſons, when they apply their wits, and tongues, and countenance in their places, for the defence of harmleſſe men that are helpleſſe. In this ſenſe doth the Holy Ghoſt call vpon men in the four & twentieth Chapter: *Deliver them that are drawne to death: and wilt not thou preferre them that are led to be ſlain?*

Prou. 24. 11.

First, they are the members of our owne body, and therefore their communion and neceſſitie with vs, ſhould moue vs to it. Who would not open his lips for a father, or brother, or friend, (as did that faithfull *Jonathan*) but chiefly for himſelfe? Who would not doe his beſt to ſhew the equity of his owne cauſe? Who would not inreat hard to ſaue his owne head, or hand, or foot, or any other part of him? So doe all good men that deale in the behalfe of any iuſt and righteous perſon, the cauſe is their owne.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, they are the members of Chriſt who is head to vs, and therefore ſince he ſpared not to ſpeake, and ſuffer for vs: ſince he prayed, and pleaded, and paid euen his owne life and naturall body for our deliuerance, is it much for vs to beſtow our words, or to beate a rebuke to deliuer thoſe that haue a place in his myſticall body?

2

Thirdly, it is the way to provide helpe from God, and good men, againſt our owne troubles, to be helpfull to others in theirs and the contrary befall eth them that are ſlack and remiſſe in this duty.

3

Fourthly, we doe after a ſort make our ſelues acceſſary to the wrongs and iniuries which are offered to the righteous, when they either come vpon them by our negligence or fearfulnes.

4

Inſtruction for euery degree to be diligent and carefull in the performance of this duty. Art thou a Magiſtrate? Remember what leſſon *Salomons* mother beſtowed vpon him: *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cauſe of all the children of deſtruction. Open thy mouth: iudge righteouſly, and iudge the afflicted, and the poore.* Art thou a priuate man, yet thou maiſt giue aduice, or reſiſt the truth, or ſoliciſe friends, or at leaſt thou maiſt call vpon

Vſe. 1.

Prou. 31. 8. 9.

God for them that be pursued by oppressors.

Consolation to all good patrones of poore distressed mens causes, which take to heart their wrongs and burthens, & seeke reliefe and remedy for them. They would not so faithfully labour for righteousness, vnlesse themselves were righteous: they could not shew such piety to good men, vnlesse they loued goodness, and God loued them for effectuell compassion and mercy is neuer found in any that is not vnder mercy. 2. To them that haue enemies lying in wait for their blood; if they be innocent and godly, the Lord will stirre them vp friends, that will fauour their cause, and stand in their defence. Some *Iob* or other wil deliuer them, though they be poore and fatherlesse, & haue none to helpe them. Or if there be none that fauour them at the bench, yet there be that will obtaine fauour for them from heauen. The praier of Gods people ascend vp to Gods presence for his helpe: and those mouthes preuaile mightily, that seeke for redresse of wrongs at his hands. *Herod* thought that it would be too late for all the friends which *Peter* had to minister helpe vnto him when he had clapt him vp in so sure a prison. But he remembered not how swift the godly be to praier, & how soone a praier can come to God: and in what readines God hath his Angels: and what speed an Angel can make to succour them that are in danger. Yet this is not the greatest comfort of Gods afflicted seruants, but this, that the Lord Iesus Christ is infinitely more righteous and mercifull then any man, or all men possibly can be, and he will vndertake their cause, and either minister helpe to their state, or grace to their soules, to beare their troubles, till the fittest time of freedome fro them. He will preserve them from sinne & sathan, which lie in wayt for their eternal destruction. The spirit of God is large in one of the Psalmes, in setting forth the tender care which he hath of his people: *He shall deliuer the poore when he crieth: the needy also; and him that hath no helpe. He shall be mercifull to the poore and needy, and shall preserve the soules of the poore. He shall redeem their soules from deceit and violence, and deare shall their blood be in his sight.* Psal. 72. 12. 13. 14.

Iob 29. 12.

Verſe

Verse 7. *God overbroweth the wicked, and they are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*

When the state of the vngodly which are not Gods chosen, changeth from prosperity to aduersity, it seldome staith, till they be vterly destroyed, both themselves, and their houses; This word, *are not*, signifieth a slaughter and killing, as it is spoken of the murdering of the infants by *Herod*, Mat. 2. 18. Ier. 31. 15. But here is more vnderstood, then the losse of natural life, and that is, the perdition of soule and body. And yet not the extinction of either: for the soule shall neuer vanish away, nor the body for euer: they shall not find so much mercy at Gods hands. Their being shall not cease, but their comfortable and well being. They shall be euerslasting, euerslastingly to beare the burden of Gods wrath, and to suffer the vn sufferable toment of death, & damnation. *But the house of the righteous*, that is, he, and those things which appertain vnto him, shall be preserved from being ouerthrowne to ruine.

They that wil not keep themselves from wickednesse, cannot *Def.* keep themselves from desolation.

They may rise, but not stand: for, vnlesse they fall to repentance, they shall be made to fall to destruction. They may grow great, but for a small time, for they will soone be brought to nothing.

The Prophet thought too wel of their state at the first, as though they had bin in better case then any other men: but he conceived as hardly of it at the last, when he had seen their end in the sanctuary, and deemed them of all to be most miserable. *Surely*, saith he to the Lord, *thou hast set them in slippery places, & castest them downe into desolation. How suddenly are they destroyed, perished, and horribly consumed?* The Scriptures flow with testimonies and similes to declare both the certainty, and suddennesse, and griuoufnesse of their decay; as the withering of plants, the putting out of lights, the vanity of dreames, the vanishing of smoak, and many others to the like purpose.

First, they haue all the threatnings of God against them; and *Reasons 2.*

every threatning sendeth forth many curses; & every curse bringeth many plagues.

Secondly, their owne deserts, which in respect of any creature are infinite, doe draw vpon them iudgements and miseries that are inexplicable.

Thirdly, the loue and truth of God to his owne seruants, will not permit a perpetuall prosperity to his enemies. By this he perswadeth them not to faint in their owne afflictions, because a reward remaineth for them, and their end wil be peace. By this he perswadeth them not to fret at wicked mens successes; because there remain punishments for them, & their end is to be cut off.

Psal. 37. 38.

Ps. 1.

Admonition to sinfull men to tender their loue more that pity them and desire that their case may be better. If others tremble at their fall that is comming, which yet neither feeles the payne nor be in the perill thereof, is it wisdom for them to cast off all care of themselves, and onely picke quarrels against them that seeke their safety? When their wound is incurable they will wish that they had better regarded the plaster, and the hand that applied it. When the disease is remediless, they wil rue the reiection of the medicine, and physition. When hell shall haue them in hold, they will bewaile the refusall of their friendship that would haue directed them to heauen. It was good counsell of *Philip*, and well followed of *Nathaniel*, when he perswaded him to come, and see whether Iesus were not the Christ. And it was an indulgence of Christ to *Thomas*, to help his faith in his resurrection, by the senses of sight and feeling; but for matters of punishment, and damnation, it is good to go from them, and not to come at them, to heare Gods testimony, & not to see it fulfilled vpon themselves: to beleue the truth of that which is spoken, and not to feeles it by their owne experience.

Iohn 1. 46.

Iohn 20. 27.

2

Consolation, that sinfull men shall not alwaies be molesters of the godly, because they shall not alwaies be. They shall not continually overshadow the faithfull, because they shall not stand continually. Though their shew be great now, and terrible to Gods people, yet their change will be greater, and fearefull to themselves. He will speedily ouerturne them, and all their power of hurting shall be taken from them. Now theye rootes are

low.

low, their toppes aloft, and braunches broad, and thereby over-drope all that is vnder them: then must their tops come downe and rootes rise vp, and all their branches wither. Now they are vessels that are full of power, and wealth, & malice; but then must be there a transposition; the bottome must be vpward, and their brimmes must be downward, and all their fulnesse be shed on the ground like water. The ground of this comfort is neither vaine; nor weak: for God himselfe doth vrge it as a forcible reason to confirme the hearts of his people. *Feare thou not* (saith he) *for I am with thee: be not afraid for I am thy God. Behold all they that prouoke thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall bee as nothing, and they that strins with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seeke them, and shalt not find them; to wit the men of thy strife for they shall be as nothing, and the men that warre against thee, as a thing of nought: Isa. 41. 11. 12.*

For the firmenes of the righteous man, and of his house, see chapter the tenth, verse 2. 35.

Verse 8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but the froward in heart shall be despised.*

AS euery one is more wise & godly, so shal he haue more true praise and honor: Sometimes, and very often the wicked shal commend him, commonly the righteous, and alwaies the Lord himselfe, but most of all at the last day, before all men, & Angels as our Sauior telleth vs in the five & twentieth of Matthew. Contrariwise the froward in heart, such whose hearts reiect all good instructions, and graces *shal be despised*, and brought to contempt among men in this life, or their faults breake out after they are dead, or be manifested before al the world at the day of the Lord. This is the opposition; He that is vpright of heart shall be commended, for his wisdom: but he that is froward of heart, shall be despised for his folly.

That they are not voide of vprightnesse and wisdom: shall *Doct. 1.* not be destitute of praise and honor.

Though some be blind that they cannot discern of their vnderstanding and graces, yet others haue their eie-sight, and behold

hold them. Though some be dumbe, and will not speake of their vertues, yet others haue their lippes opened to commend them. Though some be malicious to carp at, and depraue them, yet others be faithfull to giue them their due testimony. Neither is it a thing incident to some few, as though it belonged onely to principall men and great personages, but to all of euery place that are therewith qualified, both high and low, both puissant potentates, and meane bondmen and seruants. There is no exception, or limitation of degrees, when it is said, that *the wisadome of a man doth make his face to shine*. And seruants could not adorne the doctrine of God, if grace and godlinesse did not also adorn & beautifie them.

Ecc1.8.1.

Tit.2.10.

Reasons I.

First, God himselfe testifieth for them, and that is sufficient for their commendation: for hee is not allowed that praiseth himselfe, nor whom the world praiseth, but which is praised of the Lord.

2

Secondly, he hath all mens hearts and tongues in his hands to make them to thinke well and speake well of those whome hee would haue to be in credit. He appointed that cursing *Balaam* to speake for his people, and bleise them, when he came of purpose to cast out imprecations against them. He compelled *Saul* with his lippes to cleere *Danid*, and to pronounce him iust and innocent, when he had his weapons in a readines to punish him as a rebell.

3

Iam 3.17.

Thirdly, their owne amiable and louely behauiour allureth the liking of men towards them, and obtaineth their good testimonies of them. *This wisadome that is from above*, this heavenly wisdom which the spirit of God worketh, is *first pure*, then *peaceable*, *gentle*, *easie to be intreated*, *full of mercy and good fruits*, *without iudging*, and *without hypocrisie*. The light of these graces, the very report of them doth winne mens hearts, and draw their affections to those that exercise them, and much more when they seele the fruit and benefit thereof to themselves.

Now where wisadome is wanting, and folly is flowing, where meaknesse is a stranger, and frowardnesse a commander, what is to be looked for, but reproach and contempt? Are the poorest seruants and handmaidens commended on the other side? then the

the wealthieft Lords and Mafters are defpised on this fide. Doth the Lord praife all fuch as be godly wife? then doth he difgrace all thofe that be finfully foolifh. Doth he deriue mercies and fauours to thofe? then will he draine and draw them away from thefe. Is foft, and gentle, and mercifull behaviour, meanes to procure the good will of men? then fowre, and churlifh, and cruell demeanour, will prouoke their offence and difpleafure. Generally, that which God fpeaketh concerning *Ehes* houfe, holdeth true to all of both forts: *Them that honour me, I will honour,* 1. Sam. 2. 30. *and they that defpife me, fhall be defpised.*

Reproofe of them that loue nothing fo much as praife: for they are as defirous of it as Pharifes; and yet nothing leffe then wifdome, nor praife any thing fo much as folly. Doe they thinke that the dunghill of wickedneffe is a fit mine to digge honour and credit out of? Doe they thinke that the puddle water of pride, and wantonnes, and vanity, will make them beautiful to the eyes of men of vnderftanding? Doe they thinke that the filth coming out of the finke of quaffing, and gaming, and swearing, and finfull exercifes, wil fend out a fweet fauour of reuerend estimation? Nay their kind friend folly hath much abused them, and yet for her fake they will ftill illude themfelues alfo. Good men pity them, and bad men deride them, the tongues of moft defpife them, the hearts of all condemne them. *Iffe 1.*

Confolation to them vpon whom the Lord hath multiplied the gifts of Chriftian knowledge and wifdome. Though all countenance fhould feeke to discountenance them: though all wits fhould fet themfelues on worke to inuene their difgrace: though all tongues fhould be fharpned to cut downe their credit: though all the vngodly Oratours in the world fhould be turned into one *Terrillius* againft them, yet they fhould nothing preuaile: the praife that God putteth on, they cannot pluck off: they may as well ftay the ftars and planets from fhining, as take away the brightneffe of græce and wifdome.

Verſ. 9. *He that is deſpiſed, and is his owne ſervant, is better then he that boaſteth himſelfe, and lacketh bread.*

HE that is deſpiſed, that is of meane eſtate, for which the fooliſh proud worldlings commonly haue men in contempt, and is his owne ſervant, that is, induſtrious and diligent by labour to provide himſelfe of things that be needfull, (and ſo euer they may truly be called their owne ſervants, that are faithfull in another mans ſervice) is better then he that boaſteth himſelfe; that is, which ſtanderth vpon his reputation, and yet lacketh bread, hath little or nothing to maintaine himſelfe withall: for bread is put here for all manner of neceſſary prouiſion.

Doct.

They deale with beſt diſcretion that yeeld themſelues to a low ſtate when God calleth them to it.

It is the property of foolcs either to rage at pouerty when it commeth vpon them, or to brag againſt it, or to ſal downe vnder it: whereas wiſe men will beare it with patience, and ſtoope to it in humility, and yet reſiſt it with great diligence. It was a grace that the Scripture commendeth in *Iacob*, that notwithstanding the honour and worthineſſe of his father *Iſaack*, and grandfather *Abraham*, yet when he could no longer be in ſafety from his brother *Eſau*, in his fathers houſe, he betooke himſelfe to be an hireling to his vncle *Laban* in another country. It was a vertue very eminent in *Moſes*, that being trained vp in his youth like a Prince in the Court of a great King, he could debaſe himſelfe in his middle age to be a ſhepherd to a ſtranger of ſavage inferiour place & degree. And it was the praiſe of *Naomi* that when ſhe was a rich wiſe and full, ſhe could thankfully vſe her wealth and fulneſſe: but when ſhe was grown to be a poore widdow and empty, ſhe would take ſtate no longer vpon her, but laid downe all titles, to her very name whereby ſhe was called.

Ruth 1. 20. 21.

Reasons. I.

Fiſt, it teſſifieth the lowlineſſe of a mans heart, to ſubmit himſelfe to Gods hand, when he can debaſe himſelfe, as he hath debaſed him; & the contrary argueth pride and ſtubborneſſe, when they will ſtand higher then he will haue them.

Secondly,

Secondly, they may comfortably repaire to God for supplie of their wants and blessing, when they serue his providence, & disdain not to be seruicable in a calling, whereas the others refusing to yeeld obedience to him, can haue small hope to be accepted of him.

Thirdly, they that applie themselves to labour for their liuings, doe eat their owne bread, and are profitable to others; whereas those stately idle persons are driuen to put their feet vnder other mens tables, and their hands into other mens dishes, and to be burdenous by borrowing and shifting, wheresoeuer they come.

Fourthly, they that are their owne seruants, take the waie to better their state, and to be Masters of others, as *Iacobi* example, and daily experience sheweth, and is promised as a reward in the 24. of this Chapter. But those of an high minde which deceme a low port, and all painefull meanes of maintenance, too meane for men of their worth; are declining and ebbing, and likelic to decay more and more, till they come to the bottome of want and penury.

Reprooffe, first of them that dissemble their estate, pretending *Yse 1.* great riches, when they are pressed with grieuous pouertie: and desiring to be esteemed wealthy, when they know themselves to be needy. This extremity on the one side, and the contrary on the other, the holy Ghost doth censure in the chapter following: *Prou. 13. 7. There is that maketh himselfe rich, and hath nothing: and that maketh himselfe poore, having great riches.* Secondly, of such as being sunken in necessity, and all men see them sticking fast in misery, doe yet face out the matter and take as much vpon them as if they were of great place and ability, some in regard of parentage; some of former substance, now wasted and consumed: some of offices that haue borne in time of their prosperity: some of personages that they haue serued, or to whom they perfectly belong: and some of trim apparel only, and that is also yet vnpaid for.

Instruction, that euery man should deale according to equity and iustice, in giuing the more allowance and countenance to them that are worthier persons. Sure it is that the Lord doth not

mistake when he himselfe assigneth to men their places, and teacheth vs whom to set before as the better, and whom to put after as the inferiour. Now likewise he doth preferre the poore, despised, industrious, laborious, and giveth his voice for their precedency: why should we give titles to rustians, and roysters, and idle companions, that have nothing in them of grace and goodness, of knowledge or learning, of Art or skilfulnesse, of wealth or substance, nor the most of birth or parentage, why should we make these superiours to the others? why should we make our selves guilty of their pride, by feeding their vaine humours, and accessary to their presumption, in consenting to their arrogant aspirings? It is well done to defraud those of their right whom God approoveth of and commendeth, and so to discourage them in their good waies, and to yeeld more then right to them whom he reprooveth and vilifieth, and so to animate them in their evil?

Verse 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the mercies of the wicked are cruell.*

THE purpose and drift of these words tendeth to this, that every godly and righteous man is also mercifull: and that no wicked person can possibly have any true pity or compassion in him. *A righteous man*, every one that feareth God and is faithfull, *regardeth the life of his beast*, his love and kindnesse and good dealing is so plentifull to men, and especially those which depend vpon him, and be of his charge, and at his bidding, that it floweth over also to the cattell and creatures which he oweth or useth, or is put in trust to looked to, in what opportunity offered to preserve from hurt or perishing. *But the mercies of the wicked*, those actions and waies of theirs which carry the faire shew and colour of mercy, *are cruell*, have of bely mixed therewith, either in purpose or manner or event insuing thereupon.

Deff.

1. Mercy is to be shewed not onely to men, but to the vnreasonable creatures also. A small creature doo taste of, and live by the abundant liberality and bountifulnesse of Gods hand, so would he

he haue them to feede by sense, though they cannot discern it by reason, that there is also care for them & compassion in his children. Why did he forbid to kill the damme when they had taken away her yong ones, but that he would haue it knowne, that he alloweth not cruelty and wrong to be offered so much as to the filliest birds? The restraint that was of eating of bloud, when the beasts were dead, declared that he would not haue tyranny exercised on them while they are aliue.

Leuiti. 17. 10.

First, let vs consider that God hath made them all, and his they are, and he is good vnto them, and prouident for their preferuation, as the Prophet saith, *Thou Lord, dost saue both man and beast.* And therefore we shall both shew our selues vnlike to him, and hurtfull to his, if we offer abuse and wrong vnto them.

Reasons 1.

Psal. 36. 6.

Secondly, he hath lent them to vs for our help and seruice, and by their trauaile are we eased, or by their flesh, or fleece, or milk, or increase, or some other profit made of the are we relieued, besides the delight that many of them minister to vs: and therefore how vnthankfull should we be to him that committeth his goods to our hands, how vniust to them that are so seruiceable to vs, if we be not careful that they haue good vsage?

Thirdly, if we vse our selues in conscience and compassion to looke well to our beasts, we cannot but deale more mercifullie with men, but if we accustome our selues, to be cruell to them, we shall in time grow to be fierce and violent towards our brethren.

Instruction, that we should not onely exercise good husbandrie in keeping our cattell well, that they may doe vs the more worke, or carry vs the better or liue the longer, or be more saleable, but also to practise the duety of righteousnesse in obeying God herein. That is certaine that many wicked men regard the liues of their beasts and provide plenty of food for them, yet not in mercie but in couetousnesse, not in loue to the creature, or him that made it; but in desire of their owne gaine and lucre: for they respect their horses, sheepe, and oxen, more then their neighbours state or their owne saluation: but these are not the righteous men which are here commended: a president and ex-

vse, 1.

Gen. 24. 31.

ample of faithfull regard of his beast, is to be found in the seruant of *Abraham*, in his iourney to *Nabors* City, in *Aram Ncharaim*, who when he was come to the place, whither he was sent, tooke order first that the Camels should be vnsaddled, and meated, and haue litter put vnto them, and then dealt in the businesse whetein hee was employed, and after these things tooke his owne refection.

2

Reprooſe of thoſe that require euill for good to the poore beaſts that trauell for them, and vnder them, whom they deale as hardly with, as if they were rather noyſome and hurtful vnto them. Many waies they oppreſſe them, as with burdens too heauy, with ſtripes too many, with ſpurring too often, with pace too ſwift, with iourneyes too long, with meate too little, with dreſſing too ſlender &c. The Lord hath enioyned them perpetual ſilence, neuer to complaine of theſe things, though they groan vnder them, otherwiſe if they had liberty of ſpeech and reaſon to lay open their grieuances, the wrongs which they ſuſtaine would appeare to be great, and many. And yet in an other ſort, more extremity then this is vſed againſt other ſorts of creatures, and that is when men make a ſport of making them miſerable; when it is a pleaſure to put them to paine: when it is a paſtime to behold their torment and tearing. This proceedeth not of a tender heart: this is not the worke of righteousneſſe: this delight wil leaue no comfort behind it. Haue our ſinnes in *Adam* brought ſuch calamities vpon them, and ſhall we adde vnto them by cruelty in our owne perſons? Haue our corruptions bin a cauſe of that fierceneſſe that is in many of them one againſt another, and ſhall we ſolace our ſelues in ſeeing them execute it? God forbid. If we do, it may juſtly returne vpon our ſelues, their teeth, or hornes, or pawes aſſaulting vs, or elſe Gods owne hand by ſome other means, reuenging their wronges.

Deut. 2.

But the mercies, &c. All the fauours that ſinful men ſhew, doe commonly tend to ſome hurt.

The Lord doth often vſe the wicked as inſtruments of good vnto his children; but though they do the worke, yet he ſheweth the mercy: their hands and tongues are not ſo much directed by their owne loue and kindneſſe, as by his purpoſe and prouidence

dence. *Jacob* was not ignorant of this point, when he refused the courteous offer of *Esau*, who would either himselfe haue beene a companion to him in his way, or left some of his seruants behind to guard him. When *Saul* pretended most redinesse to bring *David* to preferment by matching him with his daughter, his meaning was to bring him to destruction by putting him into the hands of the Philistins. Gen. 33. 12.
13. 15.
1 Sam. 13. 17

First generally true mercy is peculiarly appropriated to the godly as all the fruits and graces of the spirit are; and therefore the semblance of it in the wicked proceedeth from the flesh, and is euermore counterfer, corrupt, and fleshly. Reasons. I.

Secondly in special, they vsually transuert their fauor & iustice, shewing mercy where they should exercise severity, and practising cruelty where they should shew mercy. *Saul* was so pittifull that he would spare *Agag*, though God commanded to slay him, but *David* should haue died if he could haue caught him: And hee made no scruple in killing fourescore and five Priests of the Lord in one houre; it was a small matter in his eyes, to smite a whole Cittie of innocent people with the edge of the sword, both man and woman, both child and suckling, besides all their cattell. And so *Ahab* gaue *Benhadad* King of Aram to know, that he would vse him like a brother, and graunt him his life, whom God appointed to be handled like an enemy, and put to death: but hee dealt with the prophets of Israel in an other manner, and slew as many of them as he could come by. Euen the very sparing of notable wicked persons, is a degree of cruelty against the righteous, as they be iniurious to the liues of the sheep and lambs, that permit the wolues and Foxes to liue and breed among them. 1 Sam. 23. 13.
19

They vse to peruert, and ouerturne all their good turnes at one time or other, with mischief or hurt either outwardly, or to the soules of them whom they make beholden to them.

Instruction not to be like to them, or to conformance our selues to their waies. Let loue bee in our rebukes: let compassion be in our stripes: let our severity be mercifull, but neuer let our mercies be cruel. 2. Not to cast our selues into their hands in hope that Vse. I.

that they will be fauourable to vs; if their meeknesse, if their mildnes, if their mercy be cruelty, how immeſurably cruell will their malice, and wrath, and rage and fury be?

2

Reprooe of thoſe that neuer exerciſe any other mercy then that which is here condemned. They are very carefull for their family and people that they ſhall haue reſreſhing, and liberty for their ſports, and delights, but it is only on the Lords day, when it doth more harme to their ſoules, then good to their bodies; for they will ſpare them no time from their owne works, when they may recreate themſelues with a good conſcience. Others are as forward in giuing; they will be like to *Iob*, not to eate their morſels alone, but the poore ſhall euer haue part with them: but the choiſe of their almsmen is altogether vnlike to *Iobs*; for he relieued the fatherleſſe, and widdowes, and poore impotent perſons; & they beſtow vpon a filthy generation of idle vagabonds, whom *Iob* chaſed from the very preſence and company of people.

Iob 30. 5.

Others will declare how pittifull they are, by helping men that are in diſtreſſes, and therefore if they might haue their wils, there ſhould not be ſo many puniſhed. But whoſe impunity doe they ſecke for? whom would they haue to eſcape either whip, or goale or gallows? not ſuch as be vniuſtly accuſed: not ſuch as be overtaken with ſmall infirmities: not ſuch as ſhew themſelues moſt penitent for their faulſ; but thoſe that are ordinary, obſtinate, and impudent malefactours, & moſt pernicious and grieuous offenders. Theſe are as full of compaſſion as the Iewes were of mercy, when they cried to *Pilate*, *Barrabas*, *Barrabas*, let *Barrabas* liue and be deliuered.

Verſe IX. *He that tilleth his land, ſhall bee ſatisfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

HE that tilleth his land) which is induſtrious and faithfull to doe good in any honeſt vocation, ſhal be ſatisfied with bread, ſhall haue competency of all things that are needfull for him: but hee that followeth the idle, vaine fellowes, which giue themſelues to no good trade or occupation, and is idle as they are, is deſtitute

destitute of vnderstanding, playeth the foole, and shall feelee the smart and paine of it.

The opposition is, he that tilleth his land is wise, and shall bee satisfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, or is idle (for that is the meaning) is destitute of vnderstanding, and shal be filled with pouerty. So is the supply made. Chap. 28. 19.

The exercise of husbandry is a good and commendable vocation. He singeth it out, as a paterne or ensample of al the rest that if men labour in any worke that is ~~no~~ worse then that, they shall be sure that no exception can iustly be taken against it. Many exhortations tend to it, as, *Prepare thy worke in the field*, Pro. 24. 27. Many reproofes and threatnings tend to it, as, *The slothfull wil not plow because of winter, and therefore he shal begge in Summer*, Chap. 20. 4. Many promises of blessings are to that purpose, as, *Thy barne shall be filled with abundance*, Cap. 3. 10.

First, it is the most ancient of all trades. God himselfe assigned it to Adam, and Adam made choise of it for his eldest sonne. *Reasons. 1.*

It is as much voide of guile and deceit as any, and very profitable and commodious. The labour of men is for good vse in it; and the labour of beaſts is gainfull; as he saith. *Where none Oxen are the crib is emptie, but much increase commeth by the strength of the Oxe*, Chap. 14. 4. And in that respect there is a promise made vnto them, that they shal haue a part in mans plenty, and fare the better by mans welfare. *The oxen and the young asses that till the ground, shall eate cleane provender, which is winnowed with the shouell and the fanne*. *May 30. 24.*

It is necessary both for Prince and subiects, and all sorts of people. *The abundance of the earth is for all: and the King consisteth by the field that is tilled*. *Eccle. 5. 8.*

Some can liue without flesh, and many without fruits, and more without fish, but none without bread. The Egyptians were not without fruits and fish, in the yeeres of scarcity, as it is probable, nor *Iacob* without cattell, as it is certaine, and yet through want of corne they were all in danger to perish.

Incouragement to them whose trauell is in it, that they worke cheerefully. They are of as good note with God for their seruice, if they be faithfull, as others whose trades are more gainfull, and

better esteemed among men. The Merchants, and Goldsmiths, and Jewellers, and others of such places are not so often mentioned in the scriptures as they be, nor animated with so many consolations as they are: the grand promises for blessing on their labours, is made to them in speciall, and the rest must deduct their comforts from thence by proportion.

Reprooſe of them that disdain this calling, ſcorning to be of it, or to put their children to it, as accounting, and calling them bindes, and clownes, and peasants, & contemptible persons, that be of that profession. It is a righteous hand of God vpon vs, that tillage is so much decayed, because it is no better regarded: and that there should be so much detracted daily from the employment of men, because there are so few men that are willing to be employed in it. Notwithstanding it is their great sinne, as may appear by the premisses, which doe what they can, for their parts, to defraud the land of so ancient, honest, profitable, and necessary a trade and vocation.

Doct.

But he that followeth the idle, &c. They that dispose themselves to idleneſſe, shall neither want example nor company in it.

They shall haue all inticements and allurements to draw them to it, and hold them in it, so soone as they haue any inclination to that way. They shall not be the first inuentors of that trade, but others haue vsed it before them, and diuers will practise it with them. They shall finde the yce broken to them, and a path beaten out for them, and all inducements to bring them into the snare.

Reasons, 1.

First, there are very many that are giuen to this sinne, as may appear by the manifold admonitions, rebukes and threatnings to them that liue in it. It is a sure rule to be obserued, that when the holy Ghost doth deale often, and largely against any euill, it is such as is hainous, and dangerous, and many are subiect to it.

Secondly, they are sociable and delight in company, and take pleasure to be diuers of them together. Experience confirmeth this, and maketh it apparant and manifest. How many doe sit together at drinking, and quaffing, and surfetting? How many doe flocke together to vaine plaies, and idle sports and pastimes? How many were wont to swarue together euery where, as in sundry

sundry places they doe still in that detestable course of wandring and roguishnesse? It may seeme to haue beene no delightfull habitation to liue in want and penury and disgrace in a solitary wilderness, and yet that was haunted by them, according as Iob testifieth: *They were chased forth from among men: they howled at them, as at a sheepe. They roared among the bushes, and under the thistles they gathered themselves.* Iob 30.7.5.

Thirdly, they poyson each others heart, when they come together with such speeches, and exercises, as they are not easily reduced to any vertuous behaviour afterwards.

3

Admonition to looke to our selues, and our people, that the contagion of the society, perswasions, or examples of vnthrifty persons, bring not either vs or ours to ioyn with them, or to be like vnto them. Seeing the nūber of them is so great, our watchfulness must be the more, that if we may, we shunne their company, if we may not, yet to take a preseruatiue that we be not infected by them. Let this be remembred that though their number be great, yet there are none of them wise, and though they are presently full of mirth, yet they shall not long bee full of wealth: and as they free themselves from the paines that other men take, so they debar themselves from the plenty which others enioy, and fall into that want which others escape.

Is destitute, &c. Euery idle person is foolish. Though some of them haue knowledge, and that more then the greater part of them that be laborious and diligent, yet God will not vouchsafe it the name of vnderstanding, nor themselves the credit to bee called wise men. The same that he affirmeth here, he doth stand to, and iustifie in an other place, repeating againe the selfe same words: *I passed by the field of the sloathfull, and by the vineyard of the man destitute of vnderstanding.* And the consequence doth also argue as much, when he sendeth him to schoole to such a simple Mistresse to be taught, saying, *Go to the Pismire, O sluggard: behold her waies, and be wise.* Prou. 24.30. Prou. 6.6.5

First, true wisdom is neuer separated from faithfulness in ones calling, because it is euery ioyned with the feare of God, and the feare of God worketh in men obedience to the word of God, &

Reasons 1.

The word of God teacheth euery man *to labour with his hands*, (or otherwise) *the thing that is good*. Ephes. 4. 28.

Secondly, the want and misery hee plungeth himselfe into, doth shew that wisdom is away. For wisdom dwelleth with prudence, and maketh men prouident for themselves, their state, and family.

Thirdly, his conceitednesse doth euict his follie: for, *The slug-gard is wiser in his owne conceite, then seven men that can render a reason*. Pro. 26. 16. And then ye know how the case standeth with him. *Seest thou a man that is wise in his owne eyes? there is more hope of a foole then of him* Prou. 26. 12.

Use 1.

Instruction, to be affraid of so dangerous a sinne that bringeth so much mischief with it. What can be more hurtfull and pernicious then it is? What can bring a man into greater miseries? It draweth men into euill company; euill company will corrupt them with euill behauiour, and it and euill companie, and euill behauiour will bring them into an euill state, and rob them both of their wealth, and good wit. No theues can doe so much, no tyrants can make such a spoile, no fire can burne vp and consume those things that it can. They do no more but bereaue men of their money and substance as it doth, and it taketh away their wisdom and credit as they doe not. When goods be gone, labour may get more, and friends may giue more to them that haue vnderstanding, or at least they shall haue peace in their hearts with God, and fauor with good men: but, when vnderstanding is lost as well as their wealth, what shall become of them? They know not how to recouer their state; they know not how to beare their wants: they haue no consolation in God: they haue no countenance from godly men, they haue (continuing in that sin without repentance) no sure hope of saluation in heauen.

Verse 12. *The wicked desireth the defence of them that bee euill: but the roote of the righteous giveth it.*

VWhen the vngodly doe come into perils, and afflictions, and troubles doe come vpon them, all their hope of helpe

help resteth wholly in men, and those not the godly which might direct them, or pray for them, but sinfull persons as bad as themselves, whose fauor & power they trust vnto, but in vaine, for they are deceiued by them: but the righteous are not or need not to be driven to such shifts, the Lord Iesus Christ their roort vnder-taketh their preseruatiō, and doth not onely make a shew thereof, but effectually performeth it.

It is the property of sinners one to relie vpon another. It was an ordinary thing with the godly Kings and good people of Israel to preuent plagues and dangers by faithfulness and obedience to God, and to remooue them when any came, by humiliation & prayer to him: and it was ordinary with the wicked Kings, and sinfull people to procure plagues by rebellion against God, and to seeke remedie, by flying from him to his enemies. Sometimes they reposed vpon Egypt, as *Isaiah* complaineth, and threatneth them for it, saying, *Woe vnto them that goe downe into Egypt for helpe, and stay vpon horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many, and in horse men, because they are very strong; but they looke not vnto the holy one of Israel, nor seeke vnto the Lord.* Sometimes their confidence was *Asshur*, as *Hosea* laieth to their charge: *When Ephraim saw his sicknesse, and Iudah his wound, then went Ephraim vnto Asshur, and sent vnto King Iareb: yet could he not heale you, nor cure you of your wound.*

First they are sensuall, and lookewith a fleshly eye, and then there is great likelihood of helpe and succour to be found at the hand of many wicked men, because their power seemeth so great and their fauour so much towards such as are like to themselves.

Secondly, God is an enemy to them, and they be enemies to good men, and therefore they haue no expectation to be relieved of him, or to bee comforted by them. And this is alledged as a cause why *Saul* consulted with the witch, because *the Lord answered him not; neither by dreams, nor yet by Vision, nor yet by Prophets.*

Thirdly they haue prouoked God so far, that he is purposed to execute his iudgement vpon them, & therefore they are left to themselves, to take such a way, as wil work them wo, but do them no good. For it hath beene already declared in the former chap-

ter, verse 21. that though hand ioyne in hand the wicked shall not bee unpunished. And this maketh them liable to the curse that *Jeremy* denounceth; *Cursed bee the man that trusteth in man; and maketh himselfe his arme, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.* *Jeremy* 17. 5.

Pse 1.

Instruction, to continue our faithfulness, that God may continue his fauour and goodnesse to vs. If we seeke him in our prosperitie, we shall find him in our aduersity: if we serue him in our best safety, wee shall bee preferred in our greatest perils: if our hearts be open to receiue his word, his eies will be open to see our distresses, and we shall not need to sue to the wicked men for aide and protection.

2

Reprooffe of their folly which cast themselves into such misery as that they cannot be safe without such miserable helpers. Euill men must fall themselves, and how can they make other sinners to stand? They must be condemned and executed, and can they set their companions at liberty? A wretched case is, that malefactor in, that hath no better friends then him that standeth at the bar in giewes and bolts arraigned by him. It is as bad to haue the enemies sword to pierce ones sides without, as a ruinous house to fall on his head within. The seuen and twenty thousand men whom the wall fell vpon in *Aphck*, were in as bad state, as the hundred thousand that were slaine in the field. And it will appeare in the end, that all wicked men when confidence is reposed in them, are nothing else but swelling walles, and old rotten castles that are tumbling downe.

1. Reg. 20. 30.

Dist. 2.

But the roote; &c. There is no danger to them that grow by faith in *Iesus Christ*. The tallest cedars, and strongest oakes are not fast setled and firmly rooted, as is the lowest Saint & weakest Christian. In those kind of trees, the roote cannot defend the branches, nor body: the wind may breake off the boughes, and armes and the axe may cut downe the whole stocke without resistance, but our roote doth minister as much safety as sap to the whole Church and euery sprig of the same. No stormes and tempests, no force nor weapons shall separate the least of his from him, nor any way make spoile of them.

Reasons 1.

First, hee drieth vp the spring and fountaine of all hurts and dangers,

dangers, and that is sinne; the guiltinesse of it is taken away by remission, and the punishment by his suffering, and the power by his grace, & what then is the peril that we should stand in feare of?

Secondly, he maketh all his fruitfull, and the fruit is a fence to Gods trees, though mens be more beaten and broken by cudgels and poles for that which groweth vpon them.

Thirdly, euery one of them that haue Christ for their roote, haue God the Father for their dresser and keeper: *Iohn 15.* And therefore if any thing be hurtfull in them, he taketh it away: if any thing be wanting to them, he maketh supply: if violence be attempted against them, he resisteth it. This happinesse of the Church and vse of particular Christians doth God himself speak of, making profession of his prouident care of them in the prophecy of *Isaiah*, *Sing*, saith he, *of the vineyard of red wine, I the Lord* *Isay 27.1.3.* *doe keepe it: I will water it euery moment: least any assaile it, I will keepe it night and day.*

Fourthly, one especiall part of the sap that Christ the roote of Christians doth send vp to his branches, is the spirit of praier, and that maketh their praiers fit to come vp to him, and he maketh them meet to be presented to his father: now then in al their troubles they will surely cry to him, and whensoever they do cry he will more surely heare them, and whensoever he heareth them, he will most assuredly helpe them.

Instruction, to trie in what state we stand by the roote that we grow vpon. Euery man and woman, euery person that is descended from *Adam* is a branch of a tree; either growing naturally, as he was borne in the old stocke, and so he is subiect to Gods displeasure and iudgements; or else is ingrafted into Christ as being new borne, and so hath his part in Gods fauour and mercies. If we would therefore haue our hearts at liberty, without dread of calamities and misery, we must draw all our safety from whence we deriue our saluation, and that is from the Lord Iesus our Saviour, and our being in him, and growing in him, and communion with him. Externall meanes will not suffice to secure vs from hurts without this inward medicine, & deliuerance from plagues by Gods owne hand will not comfort vs, without the respect of this cause.

Consolation

Rom. 1. 8.

Rom. 8. 31. 35.

Consolation to them that be in Christ; as the Apostle saith to the Romans, that there is no damnation to them, so the spirit saith here, that there is no danger to them: there is assurance that nothing shall keepe them from heaven and everlasting life, and here is a warrant that nothing shall hurt them in earth, and in this life. That godly gloriation which is used there, against the enemies of our soules, may fitly also be used here against the enemies of our bodies: *If God be on our side, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? That tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or perill, or sword?* Though Satan and sinners would, yet they can doe nothing against us that shall be for our hurt; and though God himselfe can, yet hee will doe nothing to us, that shall not turne to our good.

Verse 12. *The euill man is snared by the wickednesse of his lippes, but the wise shall come out of aduersitee.*

AS wicked men doe maliciously abuse their tongues to the hurt of others, so also many times they overshoot themselves so farre as that aduantage is taken of their words to their owne perill and hurt, as on the other side the godly doe oftentimes helpe themselves out of troubles by the wisdom of their speeches.

Doff. 1.

They that haue euill tongues, doe most hurt themselves with them. This point we reserue to be handled in the sixt and seuenth verses of the eighteenth chapters, where will be fitter occasion to handle it more fully.

Doff. 2.

But the righteous shall come out, &c. He is neuer destitute of a good helper in his troubles that hath a good tongue to deale for him.

He doth not heere, onely set downe the assurance that such as feare God haue to escape from their afflictions, but the meanes whereby they obtaine their deliuerance. God hath ordained troubles for his people to be tried with: and he hath appointed the issue out, as well as the entrance in: and their enemies malicious words doe commonly worke their molestation: and their

owne

owne Christian speeches doe vsually procure their peace and liberty.

First, the wrath of those that are incensed against them, is thereby much abated, if not altogether pacified. If they bee not wholly implacable, and such as haue cast off all humanity, milde and gentle speeches will mitigate their displeasure. *A Prince is pacified by staying of anger, and a soft answer breaketh the bones:* Prou. 25. 15. Reasons I.

Secondly, words of truth being wisely deliuered will very much grace a good cause, to the satisfying of them that knew it not before, and the refuting of them that are false accusers, and the winning of their fauours that for mercy were not so well affected to them. 2

Hereof we haue an example in the prophecy of *Jeremie*: The Priests and the Prophets accused him to the Princes and people as a man deseruing to be put to death for his doctrine. He hath liberty to speake for himselfe; hee prooueth his innocency, by shewing the author of all that he preached, and that was God giuing him a commandement to publish it: and the end that they should repent and amend their waies, and so escape the iudgements threatned. The Princes, and all the people presently were on his side, they spake for him, they cleared him of that crime, which was charged vpon him, they iustified his faithfulness in his ministry. *This man is not worthy to die* (say they) *for hee hath spoken to vs in the name of the Lord.* Jerem. 26. 16.

Thirdly, with godly and gracious words of praier, godly men preuaile with God himselfe, as it was said of *Jacob*, and therefore no aduersity can preuaile against them. For this, and the vses therof, see the eight verse of the former chapter, where are almost the very words of this present text. 3
Gen 32. 28.

Verse 14. *A man shall bee satiate with good things by the fruits of his mouth, and the recompence of a mans hands shall God giue vnto him.*

A Man shall be satiate with good things, &c. That is shall be recompenced by the Lord with great blessings, for the good vsage

vſage of his tongue, when he ſpeaketh to Gods glory, and the edification of his brethren, or for iuſtice and equity in the behalf of them that are wronged, and iniuriouſly dealt with. He will ſtirre vp men to loue him, and ſhew kindnes vnto him, yea thoſe ſometimes which be of great place, and able to doe him much good, as it is ſaid, *he that loueth purenes of hart, for the grace of his lipps the King ſhall be his friend*, Prou. 22. 11. But eſpecially he himſelfe will beſtow vpon him all good things for this life, and graces for euerlaſting life, and glory for life euerlaſting. *And the recompence, &c.* And ſo ſhall euery mans good workes be alſo rewarded with mercy and fauour, though there be nothing in them of deſert and merit.

Doct.

Nothing ſhall be vnrewarded that is well performed in word or deed. This hath been already handled in the eighteenth verſe of the former chapter vpon theſe words, *He that ſoweth righteousneſſe ſhall receiue a ſure reward.*

Verſe. 15. *The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes, but hee that beareth counſell is wiſe.*

T*He way of a foole,* The wicked courſe and behavior of a ſinfull perſon, whom God reputeth a foole: (for it is not vnderſtood of an ideot, as may appear by the compariſon between them, cap. 26. 12. *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his owne conceits, there is more hope of a foole than of him*) *is right in his owne eyes*, he liketh of it, and alloweth himſelfe in it, as ſafe and good for him to walke in, and conſequently reiecteth all good aduice, and admonitions; *But he that beareth counſell*, which ſuſpecteth his owne iudgement, and receiueth direction from them that are wiſe, and godly, and obeyeth it, *he is wiſe*, ſheweth the wiſedome that he had before, and learneth more, & findeth the fruit of it by good effect.

Doct.

The worſe any man is, or doth, the leſſe he ſeeth his euil. They that commit the moſt ſinnes, haue hope that they ſtand guilty of fewe: they that fall into the greateſt tranſgreſſions, imagine that their falts be the ſmalleſt: they that ſink into the deepeſt dangers doe dreame of greateſt ſafety: they that haue longeſt continued in

in rebellion against God, of all others, for the most part are slowest to repentance. These are they which are spoken of when it is said *there is a generation that are pure in their owne conceits, and yet are not washed from their filthinesse.* Observe it in all sorts of sinners, and it will be found that the greatest offenders are furthest from all remorse for their offences: Papists and Idolaters doe thinke they merit at Gods hand; and deserue heauen for their Idolatrie and superstition. Persecutors and tyrants, as our Sauour saith, will thinke they doe God seruice, when they kill Christians, and Ministers, and Apostles. If men of smaller infirmities bee admonished of things amisse in them, it is not verie hard to bring many of them to a sight of their offences, insomuch as they will acknowledge themselves to be faultie, and thanke him that reproveth them; but when notorious adulterers, or drunkards, or blasphemers bee rebuked, what distemper, what rage, what furie doe they breake out into? as though a most grieuous indignity were offered vnto them; as though most innocent men were vniuilly defamed.

Prov 30.12.

Ioh. 16.1

First, they are ouerwhelmed with the mist of darknesse, and covered with the spirit of error and ignorance: the diuell hath blinded their minds (as the Apostle saith) that all iudgement and vnderstanding is taken away from them. And S. Paul testifieth, that when he was in the worst case, he knew nothing but that hee had been in the best: before he knew the meaning of the law, he made no doubt but that hee had beene alieue: but when hee sawe the sence and iustice of the commandement, he found sinne to be alieue, and himselfe to be dead. Rom. 7.9.10.

Reasons. 1.

2 Cor. 4.4

Secondly, the custome of sinning doth obdurate the heart, and deprive it of all sence of the sinne, though neuer so hainous: the feeling faileth, and lust with a greedie desire of satisfying it selfe in euill, increaseth euerie day to a fulnesse.

Thirdly, the text it selfe yeeldeth a reason why they haue so good opinion of their owne waies, because they are led with pride, and heare not such as might shew them any thing to the contrarie. They haue allowance by word and practise from fooles like themselves, and their owne carnall reason doth con-

sent with them : and then they take to proceed from enuy, what soeuer is spoken against them.

N/c 1.

Terror of conceited persons, which proceed on wilfully in their wicked waies, and no man can reclaime them. They are wise, they trow, hauing liued so long, to know what is good for themselves, they are not now to learn how to serue God, and be saued. But the wise God calleth them foolish men : hee saith that their streight way is crooked, and their safe waie is dangerous, and that the issues thereof are the waies of death. When they take themselves to be happy he iudgeth them miserable ; when they look for welfare, hee threatneth woe : when they presume of a blessing, he pronounceth, and will accordingly execute a curse. Hereof speaketh *Isaiab*, *Woe to them that are wise in their owne eyes, and prudent in their owne sight* : They make themselves odious to God ; they flie from repentance, they thun reformation, they run into destruction.

Isa 5 21.

1. Tim. 6. 5.

Confutation of them that imagine a good meaning towards the seruice of God, and their own saluation to be sufficient, whatsoeuer their meanes be which they vse. If their mind be to haue their way good, they thinke it cannot bee euill, if there bee a willingnesse that it should be streight, they rest assured that it will not be crooked. But if the opinion and willes of men be of such force to rectifie their waies, what way would not lead to saluation ? we shewed before that such as murdered the Saints of God thought to serue God, and bee saued by it. Why then was not *Paul* in as good case before his conuersion as afterwards ? *Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, thinke that gaine is godlinesse*, why should not many couetous men then enter into the kingdome of heauen ? A traueller in his iourney may wander out of his way, notwithstanding his meaning to goe right, if he will make no enquire for it. And no trade or science is attained vnto, by the willingnesse of hauing, but of learning of it.

Consolation to them that are not confident of themselves to leane on their wisdom ; but inquire for direction in the booke of God, and take aduice and counsell from his seruants, Though the world deeme them sillie soules and void of wit, yet the Lord esteemeth

esteemeth them for wise and men of vnderstanding. And so will he proue them, and so shall they find, and so by event in the end shall others well perceiue.

Verse. 16. *A fooles wrath is made knowne the same daie, but a prudent man concealeth shame.*

THe meaning of the holy Ghost is not to condemn all kind of anger: for it is one of the powers of the soule which God created as an ornament in men, and godly anger is a part of Gods Image in him, and a grace commended in *Moses, Elisha, Elisha*, & our Sauour himselve, and he that is alwaies altogether destitute of this doth prouoke God to be angrie with him, for want of zeale and hatred of sinne, but it is a passionate anger that is heere reproued; which is not a power of the soule but an impotencie. Hee that conceiuerh the other is an agent, and doth a seruice to God: but he that is moued with this, is a meere patient, and sinne hath in that case preuailed against him. Now it is said that a foole will be knowne the same day, that is, suddenly and speedelie, as soone as hee is prouoked, hee will shew it by outcries, reuillings, or threatnings, or other such like signes of choller: But a wise man, so farre as his wisdom worketh, and his naturall corruption and infirmities breake not out, will hide shame, that is, will suppress his anger, and passe by the iniuries offered to him, and not disgrace himselfe by returning reprochfull speeches to him that hath done him the wrong.

They much bewray and lay open their follie that are giuen to *Doct.* be hastie to anger.

God did see it before within, but now men shall also discern it without: that which formerly did lurke in the soule will breake out by this into sight. It will shew it selfe in their countenance, in their gestures, in their words, in their actions. And therefore it is said that *Prou. 11. 11.* *the discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and his glorie is to passe by an offence.*

First the originall and root of this rash and hastie anger is *Reasons 1.* full and euill: it proceedeth from the corruption of nature: it is the worke of the flesh, and a limbe of the old man, *Gal. 3. 20.*

Col. 3.8. That holie anger against sinne and Gods dishonor doth nor come so easily, nor is so readie at hand; that must be laboured for, and obtained by praier and other godly exercises; and when there is cause of it, our flesh is verie willing to entertaine it.

Secondlie more specially, prid and a high mind that disdaineth to beare any indignities, doth kindle it, and cause the flame thereof to breake out so violently.

Thirdly, for the manner thereof, it is inconsiderate and without all iudgement, taking those to bee enemies that are friends, and those to be offences that are kindneses, and those offences to bee the greatest that are the least, and that to deserue much blame and punishment which is to be passed by with silence.

Fourthly the effects of it are dangerous, as S. James saith, *that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousnesse of God*, Iam. 1. 20. And this Scripture, *that hee that is hasty to anger committeth follie*, yea exalteth follie, Prou. 14. 17. 29. as shall bee shewed more particularly in that place: And our Sauour that he that is angrie with his brother vnadvisedly shall be culpable of iudgement. And hee that shall raile with all and call his brother foole, shall bee punished with hell fire, *Mat. 5. 22.*

Vse. 1.

Instruction to vse meanes that our hearts may bee stored with the wisdom which is from aboue, that is peaceable and gentle. Let vs not take in the sink of other mens faults to annoy our selues with the vnfaurif smell of them, and therewith to be defiled and made as vnfaurif to others. Hee that will rake all aduantages of wrongs done to him shall wrong his owne name with infamie: and he that couereth the shame of others in priuate iniuries, doth actually publish his owne praise, as the holy Ghost saith, *it is a mans glory to passe by an offence: it is his honor to cease from strife* Prou. 19. 11. & 20 3. Consider how amiable and louelie a grace this mildnes, this meeknesse, this long sufferance and forbearance is: it declareth wisdom, it winneth credit, it draweth loue; it pearceth their hearts, if any thing can, that are so spared, it bringeth comfort to our owne soules for the assurance of Gods mercie in pardoning of our sinnes.

2

Reprooffe of them that for credites sake, because they would not bee counted fooles will risle into cuerie word that is spoken, and

and every action that is done against them. And so to auoyd the name of fooles, they will doe the works of fooles, and to haue the reputation of wise men, they will practise that which is contrary to wisdom: they will shame themselves in desire of honor, and bring contempt vpon their owne heads, in hope to be much regarded. When they shew themselves much displeased, it seemeth to them that they are much feared, & indeed they are much dispised: great heat with offer of reuenge, they thinke will be imputed to great courage and magnanimity, but God & wise men ascribe it to folly and debility. It is a certaine rule of truth, that he is most valiant, that is most patient: & so getteth the victory Rom. 12. 17. that ouercometh euill with goodnesse. And no conquerer is so mighty as he that subdueth his owne passions and dis tempered affections. For so doth the Lord himselfe who is the fittest vmpire in this and all other causes, set downe his award; *Hee that is slow to anger is better then the mighty man: and hee that ruleth his owne mind is better than he that winneth a City.* Prou. 16. 32.

Verse 17. *He that speaketh truth, will shew righteousness: but a false witnesse vseth deceit.*

HE that speaketh, ordinarily in his commo speech, that which is true, will shew righteousness, that is, will carry himself iustly, and further righteousness with his testimony, when he shalbe publickly called therunto. But a false witnesse, a false man becoming a false witnesse, will vse deceit, will make a shew of trueth, and peraduenture vtter some part thereof, but with such craft and cunning, as shall be contrary to righteousness, and hurtful to any good cause.

He that speaketh the truth, &c. They that vse not their tongues to the truth in priuate, can hardly be brought to deale truly in publike. Doct. 1.

There must be as well a trayning of that to make it fit for equity and iustice, as of the hands, and other partes of the body to make them skilfull in handling a weapon, and bearing of armes, and doing of other feates that belong to a souldier. As no man is meete to be made a publike person, & to be called to eminent place

place either of magistracy or ministry, that hath not before declared his worthinesse by shewing forth those vertues, and excellent qualities which the holy Ghost prescribed in the scriptures: so likewise is not any competent for any worke that is publike, vnlesse his former conuersation vpright and honest, commend him vnto it, but least of all if the contrary be found common and ordinary with him. The rule which our Sauour giueth in another case, will hold as firmly in this. *He that is faithfull in the least, hee is also faithfull in much: and he that is vniust in the least, is also vniust in much.*

Luke 16. 20.

Reasons. I.

First, the mouth of the man is the mouth of the mans treasure: that which he speaketh he best loueth: that which is most in the lippes, hath greatest place in the heart. If therefore the truth be deare vnto him, hee will assuredly shew it forth, when he shall stand for that purpose before God, and his substitute, and doe so good a seruice of loue and piety: but if he haue any fellowship with falshood, he will now take part with it, beeing voide of the feare of God, and afraide to displease man, and hauing so fit opportunity to gratifie his fleshly friends, and to procure thanks, and recompence to himselfe.

2

Secondly, no man exerciseth the truth at any time conscionably but by the spirit of truth, and that directing mens hearts at other times in matters of lesse waight, will not faile them at their greatest need, when they are to performe a duety of so great importance: and so on the other side Sathan hath the disposing of their tongues that giue themselues to lying: he is their Father, he teacheth them their trade, and tasketh them in their worke, and they be wholly at his commandement: and who doubteth but that he will command them to bee on his side, and to take against the truth so farre as the knowledge of the truth shall make against his practises?

Vjs.

Instruction, for them that would not fall to false witness bearing, that would not incurre the displeasure of GOD, and hazard the losse of their owne credit, that they acquaint themselves with true speaking in all their words, so as it may be familiar with them when they are in any cause to bee deposed: that they deale soundly in the company of few, least they shew their
falshood

faſſehood in preſence of many: that they hate all lying among the meanest, and thereby auoide it among the greateſt.

2. To iudges, and magiſtrates, and all miniſters of iuſtice, that they be very circumſpect, ſo farre as in them is, what manner of perſons they admit for ſurors, and Queſt-men to deliuer vpperdicts: or to be accuſers, or witneſſes for giuing in of euidence: & well to liſt the teſtimony of the that are wont to faile of fidelity, leſt as they uſe to fill mens eares with vntruths, ſo they alſo deſile the place of iudgement with periury, and vniuſtice. How many righteous men may a few ſuch deceiuers turne out of the right way? what wrong may they offer, what hurt may they doe, what miſchiefe may they work both in oppreſſing them that are innocent and clearing of the wicked?

Will ſhow righteousneſſe, uſeth deceit, &c. The ſpeaking of true words is no note of a faithfull man, vnleſſe it be in due manner, and plaine meaning. Doct. 2.

False witneſſes do not alwaies vtter flat lies, and palpable vntruths: for then they would be ſoone eſpied, and quickly conuinc'd, and eaſily confuted: they would be cenſured of euery mā, and credited of no man: but their fraude is couered with a faire ſhew of verity, as ſlips of copper appeare to be good coine, when they are gilded ouer. The promiſe of euerlaſting life is not giuen to all that ſpeak the truth, but onely to them *that ſpeake the truth in their hearts*, that is, in ſincerity and vprihtneſſe. The diuell himſelfe did ſpeake that which was true, and euen the words of holy truth to Ieſus Chriſt, when he ſaid that God had giuen a charge to his Angels to hold his people in their hands, that they ſhould not daſh their foote againſt a ſtode: but it was guilefully deliuered, a materiall part being ſuppreſſed, and the reſt peruerted to draw him to ſinfull preſumption. It was a true information that was giuen to *Saul by Doeg*, that *Abimelech* the Prieſt had miniſtred both *foode and weapon to Dauid*, and by the *Ziphims* that *Dauid hid himſelfe in the wood by them*. It was a true information that was giuen to *Nebuchadnezzar* by the Chaldeans that *Shadrach, Meſhach, and Abednego would not ſerue his Gods, nor worſhip the image that he had ſet up*, & it was a true information that was giuen to *Dauid* by his princes, that *Daniel regarded*

Psal. 15. 2.

Mat. 4. 6.

*1. Sam. 22. 10
& 23. 13.*

Dan. 3. 12

Dan 6. 13.

not the decrees that he had sealed, but made his petition three times a day: but all these true informations were made by false men, of deceitfull lips and malicious hearts for wicked purposes.

Reasons 1.

First, God heareth our words, beholdeth all our proceedings, he looketh to the heart especially, and obserueth likewise the manner of our testimonies, not only what is vttered, but how much, whether all that ought to be, or more then should be, or the iust measure that is required, and only they that can approue themselves to him, for sincerity and vprightnesse are to be reputed faithfull, and the rest are but crafty dissemblers.

Ierem 4. 2.

Secondly, if true words alone would passe for currant without further respect of drift, and maner, those things would be many times separated which God would haue alwaies ioyned together and those things would be made opposite, which he appointeth to be subordinate one to another: truth is oftentimes spoken without loue that will peruert iustice and true dealing, and stirre vp oppression and violence, as is to be seen in the former examples. But so it must not be, a breach must not be made among those that are euer to be knit together with an vnseparable bond of vnion. *Thou shalt sweare*, saith the Prophet, *the Lord is truth, in iudgement, and in righteousness*: that is, thou shalt truly, rightly, and righteously professe him, & take an oath by him, when thou hast a cause, and calling to sweare, and accordingly dispose of all the rest of thy speeches.

Ife 2.

Instruction so to order and guide our lippes in all that we say, that men may find nothing but verity in the matter which wee declare, and God may see nothing but sincerity in the end which we propose. And so though we be sifted, yet wee shall not be shamed; & though there be accusations (as the truth must look to be quarrelled withall) yet there will be no conuictions, so long as an vpright heart doth cleere vs.

Reprooffe of guilefull persons whose trade is to be painters of bad causes. If any man haue ragged, torne, and rotten matters in hand, which every honest man reiecteth, let him come to them, and they will set such colours and pictures therupon, as shall make them appear very beautifull. But let them know that they shall make themselves to be base, and God will bring such cunning

ning deceivers (as hee hath already dealt with diuers æquiuocant sophisters) to shame and contempt.

Verse 18. *Their is that speaketh words like the pricking of a sword: but the tongue of wise men is healih.*

THere is, a brood and company of sinfull fooles, which *speake words like the prickings of a sword*, that is, dangerous and pernicious, which pierce deeper to the hurt of mens names & states then the edge and point of a sword doth to ones body. But the tongue of the wise is health, their speeches are wholesome and helpfull both to themselves and others.

No weapon is more hurtfull then a wicked tongue. Among all the complaints which the godly, and Gods owne spirit make *Decl. 1.* against the wicked in the Scriptures, they seldome complaine of any thing more then of their virulent and pestiferous mouthes. It is said of flatterers, *that their words are more gentle then oile, and yet they are swords: Psal. 55. 21.* It is said of false accusers, such as *Doeg* was, *that their tongues are sharpe razors that cut deceitfully, Psal. 52. 2.* It is said of false witness bearers, *that they are like hammers, and swords, and sharpe arrows: Prou. 25. 18.* It is said of all sorts, and of euerie one of them, *that their throat is an open Sepulchre: they haue vsed their tongues to deceit, the poison of aspes is vnder their lippes. Rom. 3. 13.*

First, they cause swords to be drawn, and bloud to be shed, and men to be slaine, and much mischief to be wrought. *Reason. 1.* *Abimelech* and his brethren the Priests, were killed by the tongue. *Naboth* and his sonnes were killed with the tongue. Our Sauiour Christ himselfe was killed by the tongue, as *Peter* chargeth vpon them that procured his death: *How haue yee taken by the hands of the wicked, and haue crucified and slaine: you desired a murderer to be giuen you, and killed the Lord of life. Acts 2. 23. & 3. 15.*

Secondly, the sword, or any other weapon can onely hurt them that are present, and in place neere to it: but the stroke of the tongue will light vpon them most daungerouslie that are absent and farre off: no place or distance can helpe against it; and one man may doe mischief thereby to a great multitude.

1 Sam. 22. 19

with one breath destroyed the whole City of Noab, both man & woman, both childe and suckling, and yet was not present at it. What a slaughter would *Haman* have made throughout the whole Persian Monarchie, if the Lord had not wonderfully prevented it?

3

Thirdly, when men bee assaulted with weapons, others will bee ready according to their power and opportunity to succour and defend them, or to pity them for the wrong and violence which they sustaine; but a malignant tongue causeth others to smite those whome it smiteth, either by reporting that which it affirmeth, or by beleevuing that which it reporteth.

4

Fourthly, the sword can onelie wound the body, and take away thenaturall life; and when the breath is gone the paine is ended: but a pestilent tongue may poison the soule, and deprive men of everlasting life, and bring vpon them perpetuall torments for euer.

Iste. 1.

Admonition to be warie how wee carry out tongues, that they bee safely put vp from doing of hurt, and neuer vnsheathed, but when we are to strike at sinne, and to skirmish with sathan. It is not good to make fraies with our brethren, and to draw vpon their names: If wee cannot vse our weapons better, the Lord will bind vs to the peace, and tak order that his people may goe more safely by vs.

2

Instruction to auoid the companie of such sinfull hackstarrs, that are neuer without such deadly weapons. What can a Christiā do or say, or omit, that will not set their tongues on worke? And how can they open their mouths to speake with their tongues, but that they must needs spit venome? if they be angry, their bitter railings, and reuilings shall haue sharp points, & keene edges: if they be merry, they will persecute with taunts and girds, and biting iests: howsoeuer they bee disposed they will vomit out impious othes, and blasphemies, or such other corrupt speeches as will either bring griefe, or infection. 2. To be alwaies armed, and well fenced against the, because we shall haue necessary occasions diuerst times to bee in presence with them. That therefore wee seeke protection from God by praier, as the Prophet did, saying: *Deliver mee O Lord, from the euill man: preserve mee from the cruel*

Psal. 140. 13

cruell

cruell man : which sharpen their tongues like a Serpent, adders poison is under their lippes. And withall let vs put on innocency : for that will repell their strokes, and ward them off, that they shall neuer hurt vs deadly. True it is that none are so much laid at, as they which are most blamelesse, the greatest accusations, and threatenings, and scoffes are against them : but yet they escape best of all others, because they are least liable to all those kind of cursed speakings.

But the tongue of wise men, &c. It is the property of good men *Doct. 2.* to vse their lippes to doe good with them. This point hath been in some part already handled, in the second clause of the sixth verse, and we purpose, if it please God, to stand more largely vpon it in the fiftieth chapter, verse 4. where is said, that *a wholesome tongue is a tree of life.*

Verse 19. *The lippe of truth shall bee stable for ener, and a lying tongue but for a moment.*

THe meaning is, that such as speake the truth in vprightnesse will not varie in their talke, but tell the same tale againe, and bee like to themselves in that which they shall say, whereas liars be in and out, affirming and denying, and speaking contradictions in the same matter.

Onelie true men are constant in their words.

Doct.

They goe not from that which they haue well spoken, as they will not stand to that which they haue failed in, as *Iob* professed of himselfe, saying, *I will lay my hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I spoken, but I will answer no more, yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* This caused the Apostle *S. Paul* so seriously to cleare himselfe of all lightnesse and vnconstancy, that the *Corinthians* should haue no suspicion that with him should bee *yea, yea, and nay nay*, but that his promises, and preaching, and purposes were stable and firme, and vchangeable.

Iob 39. 37, 38.

2 Cor. 1. 18

First, their matter will helpe their memorie : for that which is truth once, will bee truth euer, so that the same ground and subject remaineth still to repeat, and reiterate, as was to be spoken of at the beginning.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, the same spirit that worketh a loue & conscience of the truth, whereby men are made to be true, doth neuer cease to be the same: therefore as it seasoneth the heart, & guided the heart at the first, so it will stablish the heart, and direct the lips to the end, For sincerity, and vprightnes is of all things most durable, & least subiect to alteration and change. And that *S. Paul* assigneth for a cause of his vnvariable constancy, that hee minded not those things which he did mind according to the flesh, whereby there should be with him, *yea, yea, and nay, nay*, 2. Cor. 1. 17. Now liars doe want all these helpes: they had neede to haue good memory, to remember what they said before, least they tell a contrarie tale: for the thing related cannot put them in mind of it. For they vse not to frame their words to the veritie of the matter which they speake of, but to the seruing of their owne turnes, and effecting of their purposes, as hee speaketh of the vnconscionable chapman: *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buier: but when hee is gone apart he boasteth.* A notable example of a wandring, vnregenerate, and vnstable tongue speaking contrarieties almost with the same breath, is to bee scene in that blasphemous railing *Rabshakeh* whom the King of Ashur sent against Ierusalem in the time of *Hezekiah*. In the entrance of his speech hee seemed to bee all for the Lord: hee taxeth *Hezekiah* for taking downe his hie places and altars, hee pretendeth obedience vnto him, as though he came thither by his commandement, saying; *The Lord saide, Goe vp against this land, and destroe it.* But before he had made an end, the Lord God of Israel, and the Idols of the Gentiles were all one with him. And therefore hee matcheth him with the conquered Gods of *Hamath*, and of *Arpad*, and of *Sepharuaim*, &c. that seeing they could not deliuer their countries out of his hands, the Lord was notable to deliuer Ierusalem from him. The lying miscreants in the Psalmes are bragging of the libertie and freedome of their tongues, beeing altogether slaves and drudges to Sathan, lust, and lewdnesse. Though it bee neuer so much against their knowledge, though it lie neuer so heauie vpon their conscience, though it turne to their perpetuall shame and disgrace, yet if the diuell, and the corruption of their harts, will haue them to speake, they must affirme it, if to denie, they must gaine-
say

Prou 20. 14

Isay 36. 7. 10.
19. 20.

Psal. 12. 4

say it, and eate their words, how vniustly and impudently soeuer.

Instruction to be aduised in our speeches, that we vtter nothing ^{Vs.} but that which will become vs to speake againe, and is lawfully to perform. It was a fault in *Dauid* to sweare so peremptorily that he would kill *Nabal*, his family, and euery mothers child of the. It was his stability in goodnes to breake off such a purpose, & neither to say it againe, nor do it at all. And it was the rashnes of *Peter* to be so resolute in promising that which was not in his power to performe. It was to be imputed to his conceitednesse & not constancy, that he stood so stiffely in denial of that which *Christ* told him would come to passe, and gaue no place therein to our Sauour, but had the last word of him. It is wise dome then to foresee the euents that are like to follow: If we affirme ought, let vs know our warrant and ground, that we are able to proue it: if we deny any thing, let the case be cleere that it be not prooued against vs: if we vndertake any thing, let vs be fully assured that it is lawfull, and meet: and possible for vs to do it. And yet this sufficeth not, vnlesse there be soundnesse and sincerity without carnall respects in our sayings. If the end be not good which is aimed at in speaking, if the hart be not faithfull of him that speaketh, there can neuer be any firmnesse or certainty in the speeches. *There is no constancy, saith Dauid concerning the wicked, in their mouthes, within they are very corruption.* ^{Psal. 8. 9.} For other vses that might haue been made of this point, looke in the tenth chapter, and twentieth verse.

Verse 20. *Doeit commeth to the heart of them that practise mischief, and ioi to the counsellors of peace.*

D*oeit commeth to the heart, &c.* that is sorrow and griefe commeth to the hearts of them that plot mischief against others by aduise, or attempt, when they shall find their seruises decciued in their deuises. But such as vse their thoughts and words to moue men to be at peace with God and their neighbours, and to walke in the way of peace and good prosperity, shall not fall of the comfort of their faithfull and wholesome counsell.

Crafty

Doff. 1.

Craffy persons shall feele the smart and woe of their own sub-
till practises.

Chap. 11. 18.

When their hearts take pleasure in inuventing of euill, they
must be put to the pain to beare the burden of their euill inuen-
tions. Vexation and mourning are not so meete for any, as for
them that study how they may vex their brethren, and bring
them to mourne. As we haue already shewed that wicked works
deceiue them that doe them, so for the same causes it will appeare
that the warping of sinfull courses wil turn to their hurt that ima-
gine them.

Reasons 1.

Pro. 14. 22.

First their successe will not answer to their expectations, they
shall faile of that which they fully assure themselves of: as it is
said, *Doe they not erre that imagine euill*? Where the question is not
propoled in way of doubting, but of certainty, as of a thing that
is cleere and manifest, and in no wise to be gaine said. Neuer any
man of an hurtful hart had his will satisfied, and his desire fulfil-
led to his contentment, and consequently according to his hope.
Women commonly haue paine breeding of child, and pangs in
trauell, and comfort when they are deliuered: but malicious men
conceiue ioy at the time that they go great with their purposes,
& most when they are bringing forth, & nothing but anger, and
sorrow, and shame, when they see nothing but a mishapen mon-
ster, to be borne vnto them.

2

Secondly, though they seeme to preualle for a time, and effe&
their purposes so as their hearts wished, yet somewhat hindreth
their full comfort for the instant, as it did *Haman* and *Achab*,
and all be ouerturned in the end, and themselves be ouerwhel-
med therewith, as the case of *Haman*, and *Daniels* aduersaries
testifieth.

3

Thirdly, though they should work their willes, & bring their
purposes to passe and escape vnpunished, as long as they liue, yet
because there is a iudgement to begin whē life is ended, they are
nothing the better for being spared so long. All their cunning,
all their craft, all their wiles and shifting will not serue the turne
to wind themselves out of the woe that is denounced against
them, and the wofull punishments that shall be executed vpon
them.

Instruction

Instruction that we vse our thoughts and minds to better meditations and studies, then to nourish that by Art which groweth too fast by nature. Our flesh breedeth an aptnesse and inclination to doe euill; and become hurtfull that we shall not need to beate our braines about it, but rather haue cause with all carefulnesse to bethink vs how we may shun & auoide it. Let vs leaue that craft to the diuell which is the master and teacher of it, who laboureth to haue all to be his apprentices, and is most ready to informe euery one to be most expert and skilfull in that damnable trade of craftines. But neither himselfe frō the beginning of the world to this day hath gained any thing by it, but desperat madnes and vexation, besides euerlasting damnation to come, neither any on of his seruants of all the millions of millions that haue learned of him, hath in any one thing bin the better by it, but euery way vniutterably the worse.

Consolation to the poore, simple, and harmlesse seruants of God, against whom the euill is intended, that it shall rebound vpon the authors, and returne vpon the practisers, and neuer light vpon them. Many hearts are wishing their hurt; many minds are musing how to worke it: many tongues are consulting who shall do it: many hands are ready to execute it: many mouthes insulting ouer them that shall suffer it, and all this while the only watchman of Israel, and the keeper of the Church doth laugh them to scorne. He maketh their minds to mistake that which they looked at: he maketh their hearts to be filled with feares: he maketh their tongues to bespeak their own misery: he maketh their hands to be hurtfull to themselves: and he maketh this people to sit safely in the midst of them. And this is truely affirmed by *Eliphaz*, and warranted by the spirit of God in the book of *Iob*. *He scattereth the devices of the crafty: so that their hands cannot accomplish that which they do enterprise. He taketh the wise in their craftines, and the counsell of the wicked is made foolish. They meet with darknesse in the day time, and grope at noon day as in the night. But he saueth the poore from the sword, from their mouth and from the hand of the violent man.* Iob. 5. 12. 13

But to the counsellors) Holesome counsell is comfortable to *Dolt. 2.* them that giue it, as well as profitable to them that take it.

If the tongue perswade to that which is right, and the heart agree with the perswasion of the tongue, whatsoeuer successe his words do find in others, hee is sure to find ioy and gladnesse in his owne soule. The same blessing which *Dauid* pronounced vpon *Abigail*, for procuring of peace by her counsell, the Lord doth promise and pronounce, and will performe to euery one whose affection and behauiour is like to *Abigails*. Blessed saith hee, *bee thy counsell, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood.* And our Sauour extendeth it generally to all that labour vprightly, and in due manner to make peace, saying, *Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God.* Mat. 5. 9.

1
Sam. 25. 3. 3.

Reasons. 1.

First, no man can soundly seeke to reconcile man to God, or one man to another, or giue direction for his neighbors welfare, vnlesse he himselfe be reconciled to God, and peaceable towards men, and haue Christian loue in his heart; and those graces are neuer separated from holy comfort and gladnesse. For the same sappe that sendeth forth the one, doth in like manner also yeeld the other, as the Apostle testifieth, *The fruit of the spirit is loue, ioy, peace, &c.* And in another place, *The kingdome of God is not meate, and drinke, but righteousness, and peace, and ioy in the holy Ghost.*

Gal. 5. 22.
Rom. 14. 17.

2

If their counsell be imbraced and followed, the good effect thereof with Gods blessing will minister cause of reioycing, besides thanks and kindnesse which the parties holpen by their counsell will yeeld vnto them: as *Dauid* to *Abigail*, and *Naaman* to *Elisba*, and the taylor and *Lydia* to *Paul*: Act. 16. 17. 33. 34.

3

Isai 49. 4. 5.

Thirdly, though their aduise be reiected, yet as *Isaiab* saith, their reward is with the Lord, and they shall be glorious in his eyes. And their faithfull dealing wil bring them both comfort & praise as *Ionathau* found in seeking to pacifie his fathers displeasure vnjustly kindled against *Dauid*.

¶ 2.

Instruction to moue vs to be frequent, and diligent in so good a seruice, whereof there is so much need, and opportunity of imployment (for worke may be had euery where) and so good a recompence for our trauell, as ioy is, and therefore Gods fauour, and therefore Gods blessing with eternall glory. And what though

though there be oppositions against vs, as all faithfull peacemakers shall meet froward persons that will bee vnpeaceable, yet if the God of peace be at peace with vs, and protector of vs, what cause haue we to stand in any feare? he would not promise vs ioy vnlesse he were resolved to performe it: and he would not encourage vs to be ioyfull, vnlesse our state were safe and happy. And why then are we so timorous to speake when we see dissention among equals, contempt of superiors, oppression of inferiours, sinning against mens owne soules, and warre against the Lord himselfe? It is because we would not giue offence? It is an offence to be silent at the offences committed against God, and the hurt that men doe to themselves and their neighbours. Is it because we would auoide trouble and displeasure, and keepe our selues from griefe and sorrow? The way to doe that is to please God, who can make them whose anger we feare, to fauour vs, and bee meanes of our peace and consolation. But in counselling of peace we must looke to these things, first, that we be iustly called to deal in that particular case, *least meddling with the strife that belongeth not vnto vs, wee bee as one that taketh a dog by the eares.* Secondly, that we make no attonement betwene wicked men in their wickednesse, as *Hester* would not make *Haman* and *Absurru* friends when they were fallen out: for how much concord had been between *Haman* and the King, so much discord would haue been between the King and the Church. So that in setting agreement between man and man, it is good to set variance between a man and his sinne, and to leaue sinfull men at variance, whose reconciliation doth tend to the dishonor of God and the hurt of his people.

Prou. 26. 17.

Reprooffe and terror of makebates, which are counsellours of *Vse*. contention, of sinfulness, and wrong doing: which shall be handled in a fitter place, when we come to these words: *Without wood the fire is quenched, and without a talebearer strife ceaseth.* Cha. 26. 20. In the meane time let them bee admonished that incense great men, as Landlords, and Magistrates, and maisters, against their poore, weake inferiours that liue vnder them. The Lord will heare their cries and groanes, not only against the mighty ones that lay too heauy burdens vpon them but also against all those

that have been meanes and causers of it. And be this remembred withall on both sides, as well on their part that be so easily perswaded to rigour and cruelty, as of theirs that moue them to it, or incorage them in it, that this deuise doth not only imbirter them against their vnderling, who seem to be altogether in their power, but also imboldneth them against their maker, who only hath all power and soueraignty ouer them.

Verse 21. *The punishment of iniquity shall not befall the iust, but the wicked are full of euill.*

Afflictions and corrections may come vpon the righteous, but no reuenging curse tending to destruction, as if they were abjects. But the wicked are full of euill both of guiltinesse and continuall practise: according to the corruption of their hearts, which the righteous are purged from, and therefore also of those punishments which the righteous escape.

Doct. Though the Lord afflict the godly, as well as the godlesse, yet it is done in farre different manner.

He commeth as a father in mercy and mildnes to the one, and dealeth as a Iudge or rather an enemy, in wrath & severity with the other. He cometh with his pruning knife to cut off the superfluous sprigges and branches of the one, and with a keen axe in his hand to hew down by the roots the stocks & bodies of the other. And this difference is spoken of in the fourteenth chapter of this book, vers. 32. *The wicked shall be cast away for his unquietnes: but the righteous hath hope in his death.* And this difference is spoken of in the seauen and twentieth of Isaiah, verse. 7. *Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? or is he slaine according to the slaughter of them that were slaine by him?* That is hath the Lord plagued Israel his Church and people in such a grieuous manner as he hath destroyed their enemies? it is manifest he hath not. And this difference is spokē of in the eight chapter to the Romans verse 1. *that there is no damnation to them that are in Christ Iesum that walk after the spirit, as there is to them that walk after the flesh.*

Chap. 11. 31. The foure reasons wherewith the last doctrine of the former chap.

chapter was proued, do euidently confirm this point: and therefore to auoyd prolixity, & vnneccessary repetitions, we refer the reader to that place.

Instruction, to labour to be vnlike to sinfull men in behaviour *Verse. 1.*
as we are desirous to haue a better condition. Let vs set our selues as enemies against the dominion and kingdome of iniquity, as they do yeeld themselves to be subiects and slaues vnto it: let vs seeke to cleanse our selues from all filthinesse both of the flesh and spirit, and be filled with the graces of the holy Ghost, and the fruits of the same, as they are full of sinnes, and vnrighteousnesse.

For the wicked not to conceiue the better of their owne case, nor the godly to like the worse of theirs, because externally all things seem to happen alike to both sides: for there cannot be so great a disparity betweene any earthly things, though neuer so contrary one to another, as there is betweene their estates, notwithstanding that in shew and appearance they are alike.

Verse 22. The lying lippes are abomination to the Lord: but they that deale truly are his delights.

THe sense is plaine enough of it selfe, if the supply be made of that which is vnderstood in both clauses. The Lord abhorreth lying lips, that is, those persons that abuse their lippes to lying, which will also be false in their deeds: & he is well pleased with them that deale faithfully, which will likewise be true in their words.

Every liar is a loathsome person, God doth neuer hate any thing that is not hatefull, and that must needs be odible which he abhorreth, and especially when it is abomination, which is in hie degree abominable vnto him. And that hee is so affected towards liars, his owne word in other places doth testifie. As when he saith in this booke, *These sixe things doth the Lord hate: yea his soule abhorreth seuen: the bawny eyes, and a lying tongue, and the hands that shed innocent blood, &c.* *Doth.* *Prou. 6. 17.* Yee may know by their companions among whom they are marshalled, what account he maketh of them. And so in the Revelation of S. Iohn,

Reuel. 11. 8.

he declareth his detestation of them by reckoning vp their fel-
lowes, and describing their grieuous punishment. *The fearefull
and vnbeleewing, and the abominable, and murderers, & whoremong-
ers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liers shall haue their part in
the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second
death.*

Reasons 1.

Iohn 8. 44.

First, nothing is more contrary to the nature of God, who is in-
finitely true, and truth it selfe, then guile and falshood is. And mo-
thing maketh men more like to sathan, and workers of his will,
then lying. So our Sauour told the wicked vnbeleewing Iewes:
*Yee are of your father the diuell, and the lusts of your father ye will
doe. Hee abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.
When he speaketh a lie, then he speaketh of his owne: for he is a liar,
and the father thereof.* It is his mother tongue, & native language
to lie; when he uttereth any true sentence it is but borrowed, and
that also he cannot truly deliuer, without grosse deceit and dis-
simulation.

2

Col. 3. 9.

Secondly, lying is a work of the old man, and that which mis-
becommeth the children of God, and lyars such as giue them-
selues vnto it, are vnregenerate, and as yee the children of wrath,
and subiect to damnation.

3

Ephe. 4. 25.

V/c 1.

Thirdly they are iniurious to them whom they mis-informe,
making them to beleue errors, and many times, many euill con-
sequents insue vpon it.

And therefore the Apostle exhorteth al that are effectually re-
generate, *to cast off lying, and to speake every man truth vnto his
neighbour, because we are members one of another.*

Ish. 42. 6.

Instruction, to work vpon our owne hearts so, as that we com-
ming also to hate lying, God may loue vs for truth, and not haue
vs in detestation for falshood. If we cause him to abhorre our
lippes for our vntruths to men, he will abhorre our praiers and
thanksgiuing, and whatsoeuer shall proceede out of our lippes
to him. And it is not enough to leaue lying in respect of hereaf-
ter, but to loath the sinne of it that hath been committed by vs
heretofore. When *Iob* knew that his words were displeasing to
the Lord, though they were few, and onely rash and vnadvised,
and he himself by error was deceiued in them, he abhorred him-
selfe

selfe, and repented in dust & ashes: how much more then ought we to do it, which haue more prouoked God with innumerable false speeches, and that knowingly and with purpose of deceiuing, and he doth professe that they haue been, and are abominable to him? And what though we haue sometimes kept our selues from blame by telling of lies? What though we haue delighted others, and obtained fauour to our selues thereby? What though we haue made our gaine and commodity of it? Wil all this, if this were the winning of all the world, be able to counteruaile the high displeasure of God, and the losse of his fauor, together with the forsaking of our owne saluation? And hereby shall we know that we be soundly purged from lying, if we do not only forbear to lie, but be vtterly vnwilling that any other should tell a lye for vs. For that is the note of a righteous man, that he *hateth lying words*, as well as forbeareth to speak them. And they shall be shut out of the kingdome of heauen together, which loue, and which make lyes. *Reu. 22. 15.* Prou. 13. 3.

Consolation to them that loue the trueth and exercise it: the same God that hateth liars so deadly, is as well pleased with true men that affect, and praise that which he loueth so dearely. Be it therefore that they are maligned for saying that which true is and hath not only purchased euill will, but hard dealing, and that, at their hands which seem to be able to beate downe all before them; yet know & remember that God maketh account of thee for thou art his delight: and those that be his fauorites shall find his fauour effectuall against all aduersaries, for safety and protection.

But they that deale truly, &c. That trueth which is acceptable to God consisteth both in speaking and doing. Doct.

Nothing can please him but the image of that which is in him and the streames which flow from him, as doth this reall and operative trueth, and not that which is verball and in word only.

This is testified of the Lord Iesus Christ the dearely beloved sonne of God, who is proposed to vs for a perfect example to imitate, *that hee did no wickednesse, as no deceit was found in his mouth.* Isa 53. 9.

First,

Reasons. 1.

First, his word in many places doth command both, and that equally, and no where doth dispence with the want of either.

2

Secondly, his spirit doth infuse both, and that inseparably, and maketh euery man that hath attained to the one to be able to vse the other. That which *S. Iohn* setteth down in a more generall manner doth strongly confirme this particular point. *If any man sinne not in word, he is a perfect man and able to bridle all the body.* His meaning is not that some be absolute without sinne in word, and perfect, without infirmity in goodnes: but that many be gracious without sinfulness, though they haue their slips in speeches: and sincere, without wickednes, though they haue their frailties in behaiour.

3

Thirdly, both are infallible, & essentiall fruits of regeneration: and the Apostle doth perswade vs *therby* to declare our selues to be of the number of the saints, and faithfull, saying: *Cast off lying, and let him that stole, steal no more.* Ephes. 4. 25. 28.

4

Psalm. 15. 1. 2

Fourthly, both are required of them, that would know, and manifest themselves to be naturall members of the Church in this life, and inheritors of saluation in the life to come. *Lord, faith David, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle? who shall rest in thy holy mountains? Hee, saith God, that walketh vprightly, and worketh righteously, and speaketh the truth in his heart.*

Vse. 1.

Instruction, 1. if we would haue the constant credit of honesty among men, or the comfort of it in our own soules, or the allowance of it in Gods presence, that wee bee not more smooth in words, then faithfull in workes: that men may not more beloeue vs to be true in speeches, then the Lord shal discern vs to be truly in actions.

2

Not to be ouerhasty to receiue their reports, whom we are able to conuince of vnfaithfulness in behaiour. If God giue vs a caueat to looke to them, and beware of them, if he commend none to vs for credible, but such as are righteous, why should we set light by his certificate, & be credulous to hearken to sinfull persons? especially sithence of all others, they are most ready to fill mens cares with pernicious and hurtfull informations.

Verse.

Verse 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fooles publisheth foolishnesse.*

A *Prudent man*, he that is of good discretion, and hath learned to be wary and circumspect, concealeth knowledge, not that he shutteth it vp altogether, without any vse or benefit of it to others: for that were contrary to the profession which the Prophet maketh of that wherein euery godly man ought to follow him; *I haue not hid thy righteousness within my heart, but I haue declared thy iustnes & thy saluation; I haue not concealed thy mercy and thy truth from the great congregation.* Psal. 40. 10. And that were contrary to the testimony which is giuen of wise men, chap. 15. 7. *The lippet of the wise doe spread abroad knowledge.* But he will obserue all good circumstances of speaking, that it bee in time and place, when good opportunity doth require it, and good effect is like to be wrought by it. And contrariwise the heart of a foole which leadeth his tongue (for guide it doth not) doth set the tongue on work either to vtter bad matter, or that which is good in bad manner, that euery man may see the folly which is in it.

It is not good for any man to speake as much, and as often as he can, but as often, and as much as he ought. Many wise sayings and sentences, are inserted by the spirit of God into this booke, to teach men how to be heedfull for the obseruation of this rule. As when it is said, that *the tongue of the wise vseth knowledge aright*: Chap. 15. 2. And that *a foole pourest out all his mind: but a wise man keepeth in till afterward.* Chap. 29. 11.

First this sparing of speech, when men reserue themselves for fit occasions, and only vtter that which serueth for vse, doth giue a cleere testimony of a mind that is stored with vnderstanding & iudgement. And this reason our text in hand doth offer vnto vs when it is said, that a wise man hideth knowledge, as a foole on the other side doth exercise the contrary. Wee deeme them not the most thrifty husbands and wealthieft men that will lock vp nothing in their coffers, nor keep any thing close in their purses, but carry al their mony in their hands, & shew it to euery com-mer by, and so do they that haue no more matter within their

A a

hearts,

hearts, then all the standers by shall heare their lips deliuer.

2

Secondly, it is a point of humility to be silent in modesty, as pride, and conceitednesse maketh men desirous to heare themselves speaking.

3

Prov. 15. 23.

Prov. 25. 11.

Thirdly, their words are so much more desirous, and better accepted as they are rare, and few, and seasonable. *How good is a word in due season?* saith the Scripture. *And a word spoken in his place is as apples of gold upon pictures of silver.* The ointment that is close kept in a box wil yeeld a sweeter sauer when it is powred out, then that which is continually open. And wine fresh from the vessell hath a better relish, then that which was drawne long before there was need of it, or any to drinke it.

V/c 1.

Instruction to learne moderation and keep measure in speaking vnlike to them that be talkatiue and exceed too far in multiplying of words. What though it be true that we say, & so we know, & are able to proue it? Doth euery truth besit euery time? Should all men alwaies bespeaking all that they know? It would be a great meanes to hinder the increase of knowledge. Some be talking when they haue more need to heare: some be teaching when they haue more need to learne; and many wrong themselves & them that are present, in not giuing place to other that are more sufficient and better able to speake. So did not *Elth*, he preferred his elders, though not his betters, before himself. He would not open his mouth before his turne came, & that hee saw *Iob*, and his three friends to swerue out of the way on both hands.

Iob 34. 4. 5.
&c.

2

Reproofe of those that destinate all their speeches, and that in the ministry of the Gospell, to the setting forth of their owne praises. It may truly be said of many, that they preach not Christ so much as themselves, contrary to the faithfulness of *Paul*, who preached not himselfe, but the Lord Iesus Christ. Their chief labour is not to win glory to God, and men to saluation: but credit to themselves, and men to the admiration of their gifts and learning. This they principally aime at, that all may bee affected with their elocution; that al may see the fruit of their wits: that al may discern of their skil in the tongues, that al may witnes their paines in reading: that all may wonder at their depth of iudgement,

ment. If those be things that their hearts doe chiefly desire, we must conclude of them that their hearts doe publish foolishnes.

Verf. 24. *The hand of the diligent shall beare rule: but the deceitfull shall be under tribute.*

THe hand of the diligent, that is, diligent men who vse their hands, or other members of their bodies, or else their minds to some honest and profitable trauell according to their calling, shall beare rule, and attain to some good place of estimation. But idle persons whom want and other occasions draw to deceitfull courses to shift for themselves, as we haue shewed in the fourth verse of the tenth chapter, shall be made vnderlings, and brought into subiection and seruility.

They which are laborious and faithfull in mean places, doe *Doct.* take the way to rise to an higher degree.

True it is that diuers attaine not to such greatnesse as others doe, and yet be no lesse diligent then others are, but the Lord maketh their inferiority a step towards their heauely aduancement: and they are not without estimation in that low estate: and God seeth their fruit to be better, and their comfort to bee more there, then if they were raised vp to higher preferment. Otherwise, they that serue God in what place soeuer are sure to grow greater. The Scripture proposeth examples hercof, and sheweth how the point hath been verified in former ages. *Iacob* at the first set himself to seruice, and was at the commandement of another man, but at the last, being painful & true, he was able to keep seruants himselfe, & other men were at his commandement. *Ioseph* when he came into *Egypt* was bought and solde as a poore bondman, but being faithfull in euery place that hee came into, he was promoted in euery place that he came into. When he was a seruant, when he was a prisoner, and especially when he was Prince. *Dauid* had once the charge of a flocke of sheepe, and thereof was not a little heedfull: but afterwards he had the leading of an army of men, and lastly, was exalted to the throne of a glorious kingdome.

First, promotion is from the Lord, and he setteth vp, and putteth *Reasons 1.*

teth downe, according to his owne will. And therefore when he hath fitted men to authority, by humbling them with labour, he assigneth their places wherein they shall stand, & by his providence preferreth them to the same: some to bee Magistrates, some to be Captaines, some to be Ministers, some to be Masters, some to be Stewards, some to haue one office, and some another.

2 Secondly, the hand of the diligent maketh rich, and riches cause them that are wise & honest to be put into authority, and imployed in the townes and places wherein they dwell: or at least they grow to be housekeepers and beare rule in their owne families.

3 Thirdly, painfulnessse with wisdom and faithfulnessse doth cause great personages to looke after them. They entertain them into seruice: they put them in trust with their affaires: they giue countenance vnto them; and they many times are means of their rising and preferment. And in this sense is that saying: *Thou seest that a diligent man in his businesse standeth before Kings, and standeth not before the base sort.* PROU. 22. 29.

Vse.

Reproofe of their folly that are ashamed and disdayne to take any paines vnlesse it be in seruing of sinne and lust, and thereto they make themselues slaues & drudges. And what is it that moueth them to such nicenesse, that they will not vouchsafe to put their hands to any worke, or set their minds to seeke for knowledge whereby they may be fit for some good profession? The feare of contempt: the doubt that they shall be little regarded, if they applied theselues to such a base kind of life. It is not according to their birth and bringing vp, to spend their time in labor, or study: it will be a hinderance to their preferment that they looke for. But wil they thus contrary the word of God, and crosse the truth of his holy spirit? Wil they say that diligence doth make men contemptible, when he saith, the diligent hand shall beare rule? wil they say that idlenes doth bring mē to promotion, when he saith, that the idle shall be vnder tribute? He will as well crosse & contrary them in their state, and desires, & make them feel his words to be true. Who seeth not what beggery, & want, & misery they cast themselues into? Are they not driuen to sell away, & depart

depart with that inheritance and patrimony which their parents haue left them? Are they not compelled to borrow and shifte, and to sinke deeply into debt? And it is a true Prouerbe, that *the borrower is seruant to the man that lendeth*. For further vse of this point, see the fourth verse of the tenth chapter, in the application of the second doctrine. Prou. 22. 7.

Verse. 25. *Heauines in the heart of a man doth bring it downe: but a good word reioyceth it.*

Heauienes of heart, that is, such sorrowes or feares, as are not godly, & effects of faith, but proceeding from infidelity, or carnall respects, especially being excessive, doth bring down the heart, not humbling it kindly, so as pride may be taken away, but either filling it with discouragement, or distemper, against which the Prophet wrestled with sundry conflicts: *Why art thou cast down my soule, and art vnquiet, or tumultuous within me?* Psal. 42. 5. Now wirhall he prescribe the remedy whereby this disease of hurtfull sorrow and pensiuenes may be cured, and that is with good words. For the comfortable speech of a friend, but especially the wholsome word of God, declaring the remission of sins, and the fauour of God, expelleth the heauines of the heart, and refresheth it with ioy and comfort.

Immoderate griefe doth turne men to great hurt and annoyance. As fleshly mirth doth much corrupt mens minds, and stirre them vp to vanity; so worldly sorrow doth greatly weaken their hearts and dull their spirits, whereby they are hindred from the performance of many good duties. And so much is meant in that place, where it is said that by the sorrow of the heart, the mind is heauy. Prou. 25. 13. When *Ioshua* was inclining to too much feare and discomfort, for the losse of his men at their going vp against *Ai*, and the euill consequents that were likely to follow, the Lord would not suffer him to giue place thereunto saying, *Get thee vp where.* Iosh. 7. 10. *fore liest thou thus upon thy face?* He tooke notice, and gaue a censure of this inward affection of his heart, somewhat exceeding measure, by the gesture of his body.

First, the health and strength of the body is thereby impaired *Reasons. 1.*

and the life it selfe is many times shortned by that means. *A ioyfull heart can/eth good health, but a sorrowfull minde drieth the bones, Prov. 17. 22.* It peaceth to that which is within, and bringeth weaknesse vpon the strongest parts.

Secondly, such as are oppressed with cares and griefe are made vnmeet for the seruices of God, who indeed doth require feare, but commandeth likewise to reioice with trembling. *Psal. 2. 11.* How can they cal vpo God in any seruency, when deadnes hath wholly possessed them? How can they be thankfull, and offer acceptable praises to God when they are void of al ioy and cheerfulnesse? And how can they attend vnto his word, when their thoughts are all together busied in the contemplation of theirowne misery? The message was very comfortable which *Moses* brought to the Israelites in Egypt, when the Lord told them, that hee would deliuer them from the burdens and bondage of the Egyptians, and would take them for his people, & be their God &c. but it is said they harkned not to him for anguish of spirit, and cruell bondage. *Exo. 6. 9.*

Thirdly, it maketh men lesse diligent and profitable in their callings, whether it be in their seuerall trades, or in places of superiority to gouerne, or of inferiority to obey.

Fourthly it bereaueth them of the benefit and comfort of any Christian society wherein they are neither apt to doe good, nor receiue good. It taketh away their cheerefulness: it disableth their tongues of speaking fruitfully: it stoppeth their eares from harkning attentiuely: their presence is not very delightfull to others, and the company of others is not much regarded of them.

Instruction, 1. to preuent this worldly sorrow by preferuing of godly ioy, and that is by keeping the peace of a good conscience with an vpright heart, and holy behauiour, either shunning of sin that we runne not into it, or soundly sorrowing for it, when wee haue committed it. Looke how much innocency and sincerity any man hath, so much comfort his heart shall enioy, and according to the measure of guiltinesse there will be an inward secret biting griefe and fearfulnessse.

When anguish and sorrow, when feare and troubles assault vs so strongly that we cannot repell them, let vs then obserue that

holy

holy counsell which God, that can make it effectuell, doth offer here in this place vnto vs, and that is to haue a recourse to faithfull comforters. He sendeth vs to them, he encourageth vs to go, he assureth vs of successe, he hath alwaies performed, that neuer any was left vnholpen, that sought help at his hand according to this his direction. *Elihu* speaketh of this to *Iob*, that when a man is stricken with sorrow vpon his bed, and griefe of his bones is sore, so that his life causeth him to abhorre bread and his soule dainty meate, that his flesh is consumed, and his bones charter, and his soule draweth to the graue, and his life to the buriers, yet a faithfull messenger of God, one of a thousand deliuering his message faithfully from God, will heale all this in them that giue credit to him, and set them in as good case as euer they were before. For God which can do all things and formed all things, hath vnder-taken to giue such a blessing to the words of his seruants, and chiefly them by whose ministry he speaketh to his own people *I create* (saith he) *the fruit of the lips to be peace*, peace, that is, (true, perpetual, & most constant comfort) *vnto them that are far off, and to them that are neere, for I wil heal him.* Hereof the keeper of the prison, whom *Paul* and *Silas* conuerted, had happy experience, and thereby was preserved from destroying himself. Hereof three thousand at once, whom *Peter* couerted, had happy experience, being deliuered both from their feares, and sinfulness.

Iob. 33. 19. &c.

Isa. 57. 19.

Act. 16. 28.

Act. 2. 3. 7

To collect all good arguments whereby we preuaile against our dread and sorrowes that grow from our afflictions and troubles. As who imposeth them vpon vs but the Lord. And to what end doth the Lord so impose them, but in mercy and wisdom, as a most skilfull and faithfull phisition, for our profit? Haue not our betters endured more, and yet were heloued and blessed of God both for the present, and afterwards? Haue not we deserued farre greater iudgements, euen destruction it selfe, and is it much if we be onely scourged so fauourably with such small stripes of easie rodds, by a louing father who doth prepare vs thereby to so great comfort and glory?

3

Verse.

Verse 26. *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour, but the way of the wicked will deceiue them.*

THe righteous, that is, euery godly man who hath attained to vprightnes, though not to perfection of righteousness, is better then his neighbour, is better beloued, and graced of God, and more esteemed of godly wise men, and hath that in him which maketh him more cōmendable then any other that is vnrighteous and sinfull: and so his way is answerable to his hope. But the wicked desiring, and seeking, and expecting a more excellencie aboue others, are notwithstanding contemptible, and grow in time to be contemned, and so their way deceiue them.

Doct.

Grace maketh good men to be the worthiest personages. As they go before all the vnregenerate in vertue, so they go beyond them in honour: and as they exceed them in piety, so they surmount them in excellency. The testimony which the Prophet giueth of them to God himself, by the inspiration of Gods spirit doth make this manifest. *My goods, saith he, extend not to thee, but to the Saints that are in earth: euen to the excellent: all my delight is in them.* And *Isaiah* speaking of the same sort of people, though neuer so meane and poore, saith, *that vpon all the glory shall bee a defence.*

Psalm. 16. 3.

Isa. 4. 5.

Reasons, 1.

First, in regard of their condition in this present life they haue all prerogatiues, and preferments. By parentage euery one of them is Gods child: By dignity they are all Kings: by inheritance they haue title to heauen and earth, their food is heauenly manna, their cloathing is the righteousness of Christ: their attendants are the holy Angels, what should we speake of other things, wherein one man is wont to excell many others, and thereby wax glorious and become renowned? Who is wise besides them? who else hath any true fortitude in them? do not al others in their folly bring shame vpon themselves? Hath not Sathan subdued & as it were trampled them vnder his feet? They are dealt with as bondmen, and put to the fowlest workes of impiety, and falsehood, lust, and lewdnes, and of all kind of iniquity.

Secondly,

Secondly, in respect of their state that shall bee in the life to come, which by no comparison can be sufficiently expressed They shall have perfect happinesse, & be made like vnto Iesus Christ, more excellent & puissant, then the most glorious Angels. While all the wicked shall be brought to the fulnes of contempt: when shame shall couer them: when they shall be troden downe as the mier in the streetes. Mich 7. 10.

Instruction, to labour for excellency by those meanes wherby we may be made excellent, and that is by growing godly and religious. This waie wil not faile to effect it, and none other course without it, will be of any force to bring it to passe. Men may be very wealthy, and ignominious: they may haue gorgeous apparel, and bee contemptible persons: they may be honorable disceded, & yet without all honor. To conclude, neither strength of armes, nor eloquence of tongue, nor sharpnes of wit, nor beauty of face, nor comelinesse of stature, nor boldnes of courage, nor any other externall thing, or gifts of minde vn sanctified, can so adorne and set forth one, as that therby he may truly be reputed for a man that is praise-worthie. Ise 1.

Reproofoe of such as of all others most vilifie and contemne them that are most gracious and godly. Which make them according to *S. Pauls* saying (as the filth of the world, and the ofscourings of al things. Which make lesse reckoning of them that are truly religious, then of the dust which they sweep out of their houses, and cast to the dunghill. They had rather haue their children and freinds to bee beare-wards or chimnie-sweepers, then mortified and faithfull Christians. How different is their estimation from the testimonie of the holy Ghost? And therefore how little grace of the holy Ghost is wrought in their hearts. 1. Cor. 4. 13. James 2. 3.

S. Iames condemneth it for a haynous offence to haue a base opinion of the godly, and to put them behind wicked rich men for their pouertie: how grievous then is their sinne which contempe and loath them, & put the vilest before them, for their pietie? But one thing let them know, and that they shall in time to come both see and feelee, vnlesse in due time before, they see their fault, and feelee godly grieffe for the same, that they shall

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neuer inherit glory with the righteous in heaven, that be deſpiſers of the in earth. Nay not ſo only, but God doth condition with them that would haue an habitation aboue with him, that *wile perſons muſt be conſumed in their eies, and they muſt honour them that feare the Lord.*

The other claufe of this verſe is the ſame in ſenſe, and almoſt in words with the eighteenth verſe of the former chapter, where it is ſaid, that *The wicked worketh a deſcenfull worke*: and therefore we referre the reader to that place for the doctrine of it.

Verſe. 27. *The deceitfull man roſteth not that which hee ſooke in hunting, but the riches of the diligent man are precious.*

THe deceitfull, &c. That is a proverbiall kind of ſpeech, ſignifying that they ſhall not inioy nor haue the benefit of that which they get by craft and falſhood. If the whole ſimilitude be fully ſet downe, the meaning will the better appeare. Euen as hunters many times when they take a prey, yet taſt not of it, nor fare the better for it: (for dogges may eate it vp, or ſome other occurrent may fall out to deprive them of it, as many lets come betwene the mouth and the morſell) ſo vniuſt and deceitfull men, though they attaine to wealth and riches, may bee aſſured that they ſhall neuer haue any ſound profit or comfort by them. Where by the way, may be ſeen the different end of the hunting that was uſed in thoſe daies, and of this which is practiſed of many in our times. They made it an exerciſe for profit, & thereby, as it may appeare, provided ſood for themſelues, and the families wherein they liued, as is to be ſeene in the example of *Eſau* himſelfe, who uſed to bring home veniſon to his father. But it is ordinary now with diuers to beſtow a great part of their time to hunt merely for pleaſure, without any commodity. They voluntarily defraud themſelues of the prey which they take, their houſholds haue not the better cheere by their hunting, but the worſe. They conſume themſelues, and waſt their goods, and impoveriſh their wiues and children, by following their ſports, and neglecting their eſtate: by feeding ſo many dogges, as that thereby they faile both of care and ability to provide for their people. *But the*

the riches of the diligent are precious, that is, those things which they that are both faithfull and industrious do gaine and get by lawfull meanes, shall doe them good, and serue for their comfort.

Euill meanes of getting may bring goods to mens hands, but not to their vse. Deff.

Riches may come according to their desire, but eyther not to tarry with them, or not to doe them seruice, so that they wil turn to a vexation at their departure, or to clog & burden them whiles they remain. *As the Partridge layeth egges which she hatcheth not:* Ierem. 17. 11
 so, saith Ieremy, *be that getteth riches, and not by right shall leave them in the midst of his daies, and at his end shall be a foole.* All deceitfull persons fall into that absurdity, which by our common prouerb is derided: they count their chickens before they be hatched, so soone as they haue egges in their nest, they conclude of a brood of comfort & happines, which God hath concluded that they shal neuer obtain. *Achan* hunted after the consecrated gold, Iosh. 7. 15
 and siluer, and execrable garment: but albeir he caught them, he rosted them not, but was burnt himselfe, with all his, and whatsoeuer he had before.

The Amalekites which sacked Ziglag, and took the spoile of the city, with *Dauids* wiues & substance, were prosperous hunters in shew at the first, yet they rosted not their prey, but provided it for *Dauids* vse, & *Dauid* dealt with them as with beasts that are hunted into the net.

First, the vse and comfort of all things proceedeth only from Gods gift and blessing, and standeth not in the meere getting, and possession of them: & all deceitfull persons both in a general respect, because of their wickednesse, and in a speciall regard for their fraudulent & guileful behauiour, are subiect to malediction and to be cursed in euery thing that they deale in, or which belongeth vnto them. Reasons. 1.

Secondly, though the vngodly haue many times power & ability to increase their goods, yet the vse and fruition of all good things is appropriated peculiarly & intailed to the righteous, for whom the wicked are set on worke, and not for themselves. 2

And so much doth the holy Ghost expresselie testifie: *Surely*

to a man that is good in his sight, God giveth wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth paine to gather, and to heape up to give to him that is good before God. Eccles. 2. 26.

Job speaketh to the same purpose, saying, *Though he should heape up siluer as the dust, and prepare rayment as the clay, he may prepare it; but the rust shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the siluer.* Job. 27-16, 17.

Vse.

Admonition to withhold our hands from direption, that we take not from others that which will turne to no good for our selues. We bring griefe, and peradventure also want vpon them, but wee bring sinne with greater sorrow and misery vpon our selues: it may be their hinderance, but it will be our owne vndoing, vnlesse we leaue off and repent, and as much as we are able, make restitution. So that our prey will not onely not come to our dish, but deuoure the rest of our meate, which otherwise might be for our nourishment: & by this meanes our neighbour is hurt, our labour is lost, our conscience is wounded, our state is cursed, our soules indangered, and that which is worst of all our God is offended, and prouoked to displeasure. And therefore let not other mens successe in this vnthriftie manner of gayning, allure vs to follow the same track with them, sithence we forcknow the vnhappy euent that wil fall out in the end. Though spoile and cruelty, though rapine, and robbery, though filching and stealing, though gaming, lying, falsehood, or any indirect courses doe set vp men for a time, yet downe they must, and be drinen to confesse, that all their sinfull gettings were vanitie & losse, and all their vnlawful commodities pernicious and hurtful to them.

Doct. 2.

But the riches, &c. Wealth well gotten by good men, is great in value, whatsoeuer it be in quantity.

Eccles. 4. 6.

As the bread of deceit is sweetest, so the riches of iniquitie seeme best to vnrighteous persons: and sluggards like nothing so well, as that which commeth with least trauell, and without much paynes taking. *Better, say they, is an handfull with ease, then two handfull with labour and vexation of spirit.* And every thing is a vexation of their spirit which putterh them to any paynes of body. But the Lord tellieth the contrary, and teacheth his people

ple both by word and effect, that that onely is of worth and estimation which his seruants obtaine by lawfull means, & his blessing vpon them. And because this point is most true, and the world beleueeth not that any truth is in it, he confirmeth the same in diuers places: as Chap. 15. 16. *Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, then great treasure and trouble therewith.* That is, with feare, care, sorrow, or the check of an euill conscience. So in the Psalm. 37. 16. *A small thing vnto the righteous, is better then great riches to the wicked and mighty.*

First, in respect of the giuer thereof, it is the Lords hand that bestoweth it vpon them as a testimony of his loue, and an earnest of more excellent treasures. Now an Angell from the Kings own hand in fauor, is more regarded then a pound from another, vpon other occasions. And how great a substance many a man haue coucied to him by receiuing a shilling, or tetter for possession of all that is passed ouer to him by deed of gifture? And how large demeanes may a man be estated in by taking a cuise in way of liuery and seison? Now though euertlasting life be principally confirmed to vs by the spirit of adoption, yet the Lord would haue his eternall fauour to his Saints to be seene and acknowledged euen in his earthly benefits.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, it is sanctified vnto them by the word of God, with praier, and thanksg. uing. 1. Tim. 4. 5.

Thirdly, his blessing maketh it to serue and suffice them for all needfull vses: it satisfieth their hearts: it is competent for their bodies: it is sufficient for their families. And as their state is increased, so their hands are opened to distribute to the poore, and to contribute to the seruices of God, and euery way to shew their readines to doe good, so as God may haue glory, his seruants refreshing, and their own soules an euertlasting recompence of immortality.

Consolation to all godly, faithfull, and industrious persons, that they are euery way wealthy and rich: rich in glory which is reserued for them in heauen: rich in wel doing: rich in spirituall graces: rich in earthly substance, if enough of that which is deere & precious may make a man to be rich. That saying which is in the fifteenth Chapter of this booke, is not to be restrained to any

one, but holdeth true for every one that feareth God, *that the house of the righteous hath much treasure.* Things that are costly and of great price, are not to be rated by comparison with the measure of baser matters, nor according to the roome which they fill vp. A little gold ouerualueth much leade or yron, many great pibbles are not matchable in worth with one pearle which is farre lesse then they are, a boxe full of rich diamonds, is better then a house full of wood, and straw, or other stuffe that is course or common. And so standeth the case with good mens possessions; the blessing of God with his mercy and fauour doth conuert them into Iewels for their vse and benefit, & worketh such comfortable effects by them, as all the treasures of the wicked can neuer yeeld vnto them.

Verse 28. *Life is in the way of righteousness, and in that pathway there is no death.*

Life, &c. The meaning is, that they which are righteous men Iustified by the merits of Christ, and sanctified by his spirit, & obedient to his will in working that which is agreeable to his word, are in state of life euerlasting. The life of grace they haue possession of already; the life of glory is assured to them by the life of grace: whosoever hath the one, can neuer faile of the other. And therefore it is said that there is no death in that part. They are deliuered from the first death, which hath power ouer all sinfull men, in this world: and they shall neuer come into the second, which is the portion of reprobates in the world to come. And this is confirmed by the testimony of Christ himselfe, saying, *Verily, verily, I say vnto you, hee that heareth my word, and beleeueth in him that sent me, hath euerlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but hath passed from death to life.* The doctrine which the words would minister, hath been declared, and prosecuted in the nineteenth verse of the former chapter, where it is said that *righteousnes leadeth to life*, and therefore it is needlesse to handle it againe in this place. Onely let thus much be spoken, that the holy Ghost doth not in vaine so often promise life to them that seeke, and serue him. He doth repeate it more then

twenty

twenty times in this one booke, besides the mention that the other parts of scripture doe make of it, almost euery where. It is therefore a point of certainty to them that lay hold on it: It is a point of difficulty, and not easily beleeeued; sithence GOD to helpe our hearts doth againe, and againe redouble it: and it is a point of great importance, requiring a serious and constant meditation, without which men grow barren, and carelesse in doing all good duties: and by which they are made rich and plentiful in all holy seruices. The consideration of life, and of such a life will incourage the heart, and open the mouth, & strengthen the hands, and make the feete nimble to runne in the wayes of righteousnes: all that they can doe in obedience, they will account too little, and nothing that they suffer for uel-doing, they will thinke too much.

FINIS.

